

More prison rioters give up

MANCHESTER, England (AP) — Support for British prison rioters whose rampage of destruction left at least one inmate dead appeared to be crumbling Wednesday, negotiators said. Ivor Serle, prison officers' leader at Strangeways prison in the northern city of Manchester, said 30 men gave themselves up on the fourth day of the siege, leaving some 20 to 25 holding out in the prison jail. "I am now optimistic that the siege will soon be over," Serle said, but added it was unlikely more would leave before Thursday morning. Those remaining appeared to be the ringleaders of Sunday's riot by 1,500 prisoners which was described by Strangeways Governor Brendan O'Neil as "an explosion of evil." Derek White, a prisoner awaiting trial on sex charges, was injured in the outbreak and died in hospital Tuesday. Asked if there could have been more deaths, O'Neil told journalists: "I am uneasy, I do think it's possible there may have been fatalities (in addition to White)."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية (الراي)

Moscow meeting called off

MOSCOW (R) — A planned meeting between Lithuanian negotiators and the Soviet interior minister was called off Wednesday, but Soviet spokesmen made conciliatory statements over Lithuania's independence. A Lithuanian spokesman said a three-man team from Vilnius had been due to see Interior Minister Vadim Bakstin, a member of Mikhail Gorbachev's presidential council, in the morning. "The meeting did not take place," the Lithuanian spokesman said. He refused to give any details or say whether it had been postponed or cancelled. The Lithuanian team, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Romsvaldis Ozolas, arrived in Moscow Tuesday on an informal mission to discuss the March 11 declaration of independence. They met Alexander Yakovlev, another member of the 15-strong presidential council, in the evening. But a spokesman at the Lithuanian parliament's information bureau said this meeting had ended inconclusively. The bureau had no news on the progress of the mission.

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PLO criticises Ethiopian immigration

ABU DHABI (R) — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official, in remarks published Wednesday, denounced Ethiopia for allowing members of its Jewish minority to emigrate to Israel. The United Arab Emirates newspaper (UAE) Al Itihad quoted PLO adviser for African Affairs Salmaan Al Harfi as saying the immigration amounted to support for Israel against Palestinians. Ethiopian envoy Kassa Kabebe said in Israel last week that hundreds of Ethiopian Jews had immigrated there in the last few months. The two countries were discussing starting direct flights between them, he added.

Sanaa backs Eritrea accord

SANAA (AP) — President Ali Abdullah Saleh has stressed the need for a settlement of the 29-year-old war in Eritrea in meetings with Ethiopian officials attending talks with rebel leaders, official sources reported Wednesday. The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Saleh received the 14-member Ethiopian delegation led by Shehwan Yalta, a member of the politburo of Ethiopia's ruling Labour Party, Tuesday night. The Ethiopian officials and leaders of four Eritrean guerrilla groups have been in Sanaa since Sunday for preliminary talks on a possible peace settlement of Africa's longest guerrilla war.

Ben Bella's party to boycott polls

ALGER (R) — The opposition party of former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella said Wednesday it would boycott the country's first free elections in June. The Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA) described the town and provincial elections as a propaganda exercise. The MDA is the fourth party to announce its boycott after the Socialist Forces Front (SFF) of revolutionary war hero Hocine Ait Ahmed and two small far-left Trotskyite parties.

Six U.S. senators to visit Mideast

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Senate Republican leader Robert Dole said Wednesday he and five other senators would visit Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Israel next week to discuss Middle East peace prospects. "My message will be — let's get some peace in the Middle East," Dole said in a statement. "Everywhere else in the world, peace is breaking out except in this troubled region. We want to see more progress and we want to see more talking and negotiating." Joining Dole on the trip will be fellow Republicans Alan Simpson of Wyoming, James McClure of Idaho, Charles Grassley of Iowa and Frank Lautenberg of New Jersey. Dole said the senators plan to arrive in Damascus Saturday then spend Sunday and Monday in Cairo, Tuesday in Amman and next Wednesday to Friday in Israel. Congress will be in Easter recess during the week.

Hijacker of Moroccan plane given suspended sentence

LAS PALMAS, Canary Islands (R) — A court in Spain's Canary Islands gave the lone gunman who hijacked a Moroccan passenger plane last September a one-year suspended jail sentence Wednesday. Moroccan Nann Almakari told the court he hijacked the plane to the Canary Islands, armed with a toy machine gun, to flee repression by Moroccan rulers in the former Spanish territory of Western Sahara. His lawyer said 38-year-old Almakari feared his family would be persecuted by Moroccan authorities because of his campaign for independence for Western Sahara. The Polisario Front, fighting Morocco for the same cause, denied any links with him. Prosecution lawyers asked for a reduced 20-year prison sentence but Almakari's lawyer said his fear of persecution constituted extenuating circumstances.

King slams campaign against Iraq, urges united Arab stand

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday called for a united Arab stand in solidarity with Iraq and its right to defend itself against any aggression.

The King's call came in a meeting with the foreign ministers of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) — Egypt, Iraq, North Yemen and Jordan — who held an emergency meeting here. In the meeting, the foreign ministers, Esmat Abdul Meguid of Egypt, Tariq Aziz of Iraq, Abdul Karim Iryani of North Yemen and Marwan Al Qasem of Jordan, briefed the King on their talks, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The King made an evaluation of the general situation in the Arab and international scenes and affirmed the necessity to "concentrate efforts on unravelling

the dimensions and goals of the vicious and unjust campaign waged against Iraq," Petra said. Britain and the United States alleged last month that Iraq tried to acquire triggering devices for nuclear bombs. Iraq denied the charges Monday but said it possessed binary chemical weapons.

The King said the "campaign is not only aimed at Iraq but also the entire Arab Nation, Arab nationalism and security," and called on the Arab World to adopt a "united stand... behind Iraq," Petra reported.

Monday's speech by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, in which he revealed Iraq's possession of binary weapons and warned Israel against attacking Iraqi installations, was clear and "should be seen as reflecting an Arab stand in defence of the Arab right to retaliate against any aggression

against our national security and our right to progress and development," the King told the ACC foreign ministers.

He said the "accelerating campaign against Iraq started when (the Iraqis) succeeded in defending its national soil and the Arab Order."

"It very clearly shows that our enemies are maintaining their old position which rejects any Arab triumph, progress and contribution to peace and justice," the King said.

The King's meeting with the ACC ministers, which included an iftar, was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the King's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh, ACC Secretary-General Hilmi Nammur and the ambassadors of the ACC states in Jordan.

Palestinians say they feel strengthened by Iraqi stand

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians in the occupied territories say they feel strengthened by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's warning to Israel that if the Jewish state attacked Iraq, it would be destroyed.

"This represents a revival to the spirit of challenge to aggression," said Husam Awaidah, former head of the accountants' union in the Gaza Strip.

While most of the 1.75 million Palestinians in the occupied territories said they doubted Iraq would use its weapons to free them from Israeli occupation, many said they felt proud that it was standing up to Israel.

Arab political analysts said Hussein had struck a resounding chord among Arabs who felt humiliated by Israel's military strength, frustrated at Western support for the Jewish state and angry at the wave of Israeli-bound Soviet Jewish migrants.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip tuned in to Jordan Television to watch footage of Hussein's comments.

"I swear to God we will let our fire eat half of Israel if it tries to wage anything against Iraq," Hussein said in his first reaction to charges that Iraq had tried to obtain triggers for nuclear weapons.

Egypt will urge Iraq to cool a war of words with Israel, an official Egyptian source said in

Cairo. "Foreign Minister Esmat Abdul Meguid will whisper into Iraq's ear 'cool it,'" the source told Reuters.

"I think Egypt will also tell Iraq there is no need for such heated words while Cairo pushes for direct peace talks between the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) and Israel," the source said.

A Palestinian leader appealed to Iran to make peace with Iraq to help the Arabs confront a possible Israeli attack, the Kuwaiti daily Al Anbaa reported Wednesday.

Salah Khalaf appealed to Iran to "end the present tension with Iraq by concluding a peace agreement."

The deputy to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat called for "the revival of the Eastern Front, not as an Arab axis but as Arab might, capable of confronting possible dangers."

"This approach requires the establishment of better relations between Syria and Iraq, and Syria and the PLO," he said.

Khalaf predicted that Israel would resort to "the assassination of Palestinian leaders, speed up the immigration of Soviet Jews or provoke a battle, and not necessarily a comprehensive war, with neighbouring countries."

U.S. President George Bush sharply criticised President Hussein Tuesday.

"This is no time to be talking about using chemical biological weapons. This is no time to be escalating tensions in the Middle East," Bush said.

Talking with reporters aboard Air Force One during a speaking trip to the U.S. Midwest, Bush called on Hussein to withdraw the statements he made.

"I found (Hussein's) statements to be bad and I would strongly urge Iraq to reject the use of chemical weapons," Bush said. "I don't think it helps peace in the Middle East. I don't think it helps the security of Iraq obviously. And it's certainly wrong," he said.

In Indianapolis earlier Tuesday, White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Bush regarded the Iraqi leader's statements as "deplorable and irresponsible."

Tunisian Prime Minister Hamed Karoui said Wednesday that Tunisia was fully behind Iraq in its war of words with Israel and the West.

"The Tunisian people are upset and preoccupied by this media war against Iraq. Iraq has always worked for peace and for peaceful solutions to international issues," he told reporters on the arrival of Iraqi Deputy Premier Taha Yassin Ramadan.

"The Tunisian people are in complete solidarity with Iraq, especially as far as this campaign is concerned," he added.



His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday confers with the foreign ministers of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) in a meeting attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan (Petra photo)

Emergency meeting reviews U.S. Senate resolution, Soviet Jewish immigration

ACC ministers discuss support for Baghdad

By Mariam M. Shahin with agency dispatches

AMMAN — The foreign ministers of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) Wednesday began an emergency meeting to discuss Arab national security and support for Iraq in what is seen as a Western campaign against Baghdad.

Also discussed were Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the American Senate's acknowledgement of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The ministers, Esmat Abdul Meguid of Egypt, Abdul Karim Iryani of North Yemen, Tariq Aziz of Iraq and Marwan Al Qasem, the host — held two sessions Wednesday and are expected to hold a final session Thursday morning. No immediate explanation was available for the extension of the meeting, which was originally scheduled to last one day. Informal sources said the ministers would fly to Cairo later Thursday and proceed to Morocco to attend a meeting of the Jerusalem Committee.

(Continued from page 1)

11 Palestinians wounded

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded four Palestinians in clashes with stone-throwing protesters in the Gaza Strip Wednesday, hospital officials reported.

Residents added that a Palestinian on trial for killing Arabs suspected of helping Israeli forces escaped from the military court in Gaza city.

They said soldiers set up roadblocks throughout the coastal area and began searching for Raja Al Qalwaji.

In Tulkarm camp on the West Bank, soldiers shot and wounded three Palestinian demonstrators, including a 14-year-old girl, residents said.

Israeli soldiers also shot and wounded four Palestinians during clashes with students in the West Bank town of Jenin. Residents

said a border policeman was wounded in the head by a stone.

According to Reuters, feuding Palestinian activists in an occupied West Bank village burned six Arab-owned houses and injured eight people in fighting amongst themselves.

Reuters quoted residents as saying that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the mainstream Fatah fought with stones in the West Bank village of Awara Tuesday after accusing each other of helping Israel.

Police differences have intensified in recent weeks between the Damascus-based PFLP and their partners in the underground committee of the 28-month-old uprising.

PFLP supporters issued three separate leaflets last month criticising the PLO's acceptance of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

PFLP activists acknowledge their differences with their partners in the PLO-dominated unified leadership of the uprising but insist they do not plan to leave the steering committee.

Palestinians said clashes and torchings came after PFLP activists in the village seized and interrogated a resident they suspected of helping Israeli forces, but who others said was a Fatah activist.

Relations of the captive clashed with masked PFLP supporters who retaliated by burning the homes of six of the opposing group.

Residents said Israeli soldiers watched the fighting from a distance but made no attempt to intervene.

Labour claims coalition majority

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Labour Party leader Shimon Peres announced Wednesday he had a majority to form a ruling coalition and that he had requested a special parliament session to approve the new government.

Peres said the coalition negotiations were not over, and that he hoped to bring in more lawmakers to form a broader government.

"I said he have a majority, more than that I won't say," Peres said on Israel Radio.

Peres notified President Chaim Herzog that he had succeeded in getting majority backing in the 120-member parliament to replace the coalition that collapsed March 15.

Also he had appealed to the speaker of parliament to convene the legislature "as soon as possible" to approve the new government. Sunday was considered the earliest date for such a session, radio reports said.

Labour caucus leader Haim Ramon told army radio: "This afternoon we approached the speaker of the Knesset and told him we wanted a special session... the subject of the agenda to be session 15 of the Knesset law, which obliges those forming a government to present it to parliament."

Peres and other Labour leaders refused to provide details on the composition of the new government.

"I have time until the Knesset convenes to make the list and divide portfolios. There is still work before us," Peres said.

Until earlier Wednesday, Peres only had 60 assured votes. He needs at least one more legislator to vote with him or abstain.

Israel army radio said a defector from Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing Likud bloc has signed an agreement with Labour. It identified the legislator as Avraham Shurir, a former tourism minister. Labour officials have refused comment on the reports.

With the parliament vote not likely until Sunday, Likud has time to try to lure Shurir and other potential Labour coalition partners back into its fold.

If Peres wins the vote of confidence in parliament, it could be the first time since 1977 that Labour rules without Likud. The two parties have shared power in coalition governments since 1984 following inconclusive elections.

Peres was prime minister from September 1984 until October of 1986.

Carter: Mideast peace is inevitable

PARIS (R) — Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said Wednesday after talks with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and French President Francois Mitterrand that Middle Eastern leaders were to blame for allowing the peace process to stall.

"The problem is among leaders who don't adequately represent the yearnings of their people," Carter told reporters on the steps of the Elysee Palace after the surprise meeting with Mitterrand and Arafat.

"President Mitterrand, Chairman Arafat and I have had a discussion about the Middle East peace process, how it might be promoted and might be rejuvenated. I think that peace... is inevitable in the Middle East," the former U.S. president said.

Arafat, standing alongside Carter at the French presidential palace, speaking in Arabic, said according to an unofficial translation:

"This meeting shows that the peace process is... international and that the United States, France and the big powers play an essential role in this process."

Carter and Arafat then left for private talks at a hotel in central Paris.

Jordan, IMF team finalise letter of intent

By Ghadeer Taber Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — A visiting International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation and Finance Ministry and Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) officials Wednesday finalised a letter of intent for the release of \$11 million in standby IMF credit to Jordan, informed sources said.

"Overall, the talks were very smooth, and the finalisation of the letter of intent was only a formality since the groundwork for it was done in previous meetings," said one of the sources.

The projected \$11 million credit is part of a \$77 million package agreed upon between Jordan and the IMF last year subject to the smooth implementation of an economic restructuring programme. The Kingdom has already received \$33 million. Finance Minister Basel Jaradat said last month that the remainder was to be disbursed in four tranches of \$11 million each.

According to a source close to this week's talks, the Kingdom could expect to utilise the \$11 million by June, after the IMF board approves the letter of intent, which has also to be endorsed by the Jordanian government.

Another topic for discussions between the IMF team and the Jordanian side, headed by Jaradat, was an economic programme for fiscal year 1990 and the national budget, according to the source. "There had been no major disagreements over this issue," the source said. "On certain areas, the two sides agreed to disagree," the source said without elaborating, but emphasising that "there is no major outstanding issue."

Another official source, confirming that there were "minor" disagreements between the two sides, said the IMF delegation, however, left it to "the Jordanian government to make the necessary readjustments without specifying areas where the fund would like to have them made."

The source indicated further "routine talks" were planned between the two sides.

The review of the budget and the related programme was supposed to have been made in November but was delayed because of the Nov. 8 general elections and the subsequent parliamentary activities.

Carter, who mediated an Israeli-Egyptian treaty excluding Arafat from the peace process, had originally been scheduled to meet the PLO leader at the same time in the Paris hotel.

In May last year Mitterrand became the first major Western leader to receive Arafat officially. Carter, president from 1977 to 1981, brokered the 1978 Camp David accord which led to a treaty between Egypt and Israel a year later.

The former U.S. president, who has been touring the Middle East at the request of President George Bush, was in the French capital for a meeting of the Paris branch of the World Bank.

The meeting provoked angry reactions from Jewish groups and accuse Arafat of being a "terrorist." About 100 Jewish demonstrators gathered outside the luxury Hotel Crillon where Carter and Arafat were meeting.

They were kept at a distance by hundreds of riot police guarding the hotel. Two Arab men who insulted demonstrators were beaten up before police rescued them, witnesses said.

Arafat was scheduled to hold a news conference later Wednesday evening, PLO officials said.

(Continued on page 5)

Damage in 2 months of Beirut's Christian war put at \$1 billion

BEIRUT (R) — The two-month war in Lebanon's Christian enclave has caused \$1 billion worth of damage, forced 300,000 people to flee and brought the country to the brink of collapse, a top industrialist said Wednesday.

Fouad Abi Saleh, president of the Industrialists' Association for much of the 15-year civil war, said the losses and political crisis had forced Lebanon to the verge of economic and social breakdown.

"People lost hope during this last fighting. That was the diabolic tragedy. That has made me lose hope," Abi Saleh, 64, told Reuters after a round of difficult negotiations with officials aimed at restoring electricity to the country.

"I am still working hard — one of the few working hard — but that is to make myself live," Abi Saleh said. He said he had been made of destruction since Jan. 31. But he believed direct damage to property and infrastructure stood at \$1 billion.

Storage tanks holding fuel

worth \$2.5 million burned fiercely on Wednesday for the third day in an area of East Beirut held by General Michel Aoun's army. They were set ablaze by gunners from the Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) militia.

Even if fighting stops, it will take months to restore even water, electricity and telephones because much of east Beirut has been destroyed by artillery and rocket fire.

"We are resorting to survival, we are on the verge of complete collapse and we are contemplating this calmly because we can't do anything," Abi Saleh said. "We've been fighting for 15 years and have reached this."

Asked how many people had fled the enclave for safer areas in Lebanon or abroad since Jan. 31, he said: "Maybe 300,000. Maybe 30 per cent of the population of

east Beirut."

Diplomats believe up to 250,000 people have left the country in the past year, many never to return. Lebanon had an estimated population of three million in 1988.

Abi Saleh said the exodus, especially among Christians, was a terrible long-term blow. Many of those leaving were wealthy, qualified or entrepreneurs.

"The way emigration is, I don't know how much we will exist in the future," he said. "What made Lebanon what it was will be lost and all the hopes based on it."

Abi Saleh said 85 per cent of factories in east Beirut — traditionally Lebanon's industrial center — had closed because of damage or power shortages.

A ceasefire last September halted six months of artillery duels with mainly Muslim west Beirut. But before east Beirut could recover, it was plunged into the inter-Christian war.

Abi Saleh said the main hurdles for any business were the lack of electricity and telecommunication, with miles of lines destroyed, and a shortage of

financing. Banks refused to give even short-term loans.

These problems were compounded by sporadic fighting, the difficulty of moving through a network of frontlines across the enclave and the closure of large ports — all held by the LF.

Government institutions were barely functioning because of the war and a political power struggle.

The capital and surrounding areas are split between an internationally recognised government in west Beirut, a cabinet led by Aoun in east Beirut and LF-controlled areas.

"This is the greatest problem we face. We need an ordered country based on the whole country. If things do not change rapidly we may reach the point of no return, whereby we have a complete disintegration of Lebanese society," Abi Saleh said.

"We will cease to be a country or a nation or a state and will become people ready to be taken over by anybody."

"Lebanon is being destroyed. We are going back to the Middle East."

Kabul to end Communist monopoly on power

NICOSIA (R) — Afghanistan plans to strip the ruling Communist Party of its virtual monopoly on power and pave the way for multi-party democracy, a senior Afghan official said Wednesday.

Habib Mangal, former ambassador to the Soviet Union, told Reuters in an interview in Cyprus that Kabul hoped the sweeping political changes would help end the Afghan civil war.

Ontario plans similar changes that have swept Eastern Europe, he said. The ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) planned to dissolve itself and then operate under the new name in the hope of winning wider support.

"It will no longer be a party of workers and peasants, rather an organisation open to the participation of Afghans of different backgrounds and political affiliation," said Mangal, who is chairman of Afghanistan's House of Representatives.

"We hope to create a new political climate in Afghanistan which will allow for the formation of different political parties. Our aim is political pluralism," he said.

A Loya Jirga, or grand assembly, would convene next month to draw up a new constitution to replace the present Marxist-inspired document.

Muslim Mujahideen rebels, who have fought the government since a Marxist coup in 1979, have in the past spurred offers by President Najibullah to share power in a coalition.

Political pluralism would be given prominence and all references to the pro-Soviet PDPA deleted in the new constitution, Mangal said.

He was attending a conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, grouping parliamentarians from around the world, which voted Monday to accept Afghanistan as a member.

Although the Afghan constitution provides for the formation of political organisations, the PDPA has so far tolerated only parties which have not challenged its leading political role and constitutional privileges.

Mangal said a PDPA congress would meet later this year to choose a new name and change the party's manifesto.

The Loya Jirga, the highest authority in Afghanistan, would appeal to opposition parties and refugees to return home to take part in the new political system.

Najibullah appealed at the weekend to the five million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan and Iran to return and promised the government would give back property seized under the Communists.

In a separate development, a defecting Afghan Air Force pilot said Tuesday pilots who bombed Kabul's presidential palace last month did not at first know about a coup attempt against Najibullah.

Major Bakht Jamal said in an interview issued by an exile Afghan News Service he received the bombing orders while flying over Kabul on March 5.

"I was told that they would tell me in the air what to do. When another fighter bombed the presidential palace, I was ordered to bomb the same target and I did so," he said.

Qadhafi seeks better ties with U.S.

KUWAIT (AP) — The daily newspaper Al-Watan reported Wednesday that Libyan leader Col. Muammar Qadhafi is willing to improve relations with the United States.

Quoting informed diplomatic sources, the paper said Qadhafi communicated this desire to the General People's Congress, the highest decision-making authority in Libya, in a secret session. "Addressing the congress, Qadhafi said the United States is an inevitable evil and the meeting should find a way for restoring relations with it," Al Watan quoted the sources as saying.

Bnt, also Wednesday, Libya's official news agency quoted Qadhafi as calling for the departure of the United States from the Mediterranean region.

Libya has never broken diplomatic relations with the United States. But the United States closed its embassy in Tripoli after it was sacked by Libyan protesters in December 1979.

Former U.S. President Ronald Reagan imposed an economic boycott on Libya in January 1986 that has regularly been renewed.

Last month, Qadhafi was quoted by the official Libyan News Agency (JANA) as saying no Islamic country should have diplomatic relations with the United States, Britain and West Germany and calling for a Muslim economic boycott against them.

"No Islamic country should establish relations with the U.S. government and its allies," he said. "Rather, we should have a decisive and perpetual boycott against them."

Recently, the United States has revived allegations that Libya's Rabta chemical plant was manufacturing outlawed chemical weapons.

Libya has said it suspects Israel, the United States and West Germany were responsible for a recent fire that damaged the plant.

The United States attacked Libya targets three times in the 1980s, twice shooting down Libyan fighter planes and bombing Tripoli in 1986 on charges that the country supported attacks against Americans.

Qadhafi has appealed to Muslims to release foreign hostages held in the Middle East in connection with the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, reported Wednesday.

Qadhafi specifically mentioned Jacqueline Valente, a Frenchwoman captured on a yacht off Cyprus in 1987 by Abu Nidal's Libyan-backed Fateh Revolutionary Council, said the JANA report monitored in Rome.

It said Qadhafi appealed to "rank and file Muslims the world over in his capacity as the leader of the International Islamic People's Conference calling for releasing the hostages and prisoners of conscience on the advent of the blessed month of Ramadan — the month of love and tolerance."

Ramadan began in late March. The JANA dispatch said Qadhafi stressed Islamic humanitarian values and called for refraining from detaining innocent people.

"He has called to mind the hostages in the Middle East of various nationalities and religions, in particular the French hostage," Jacqueline Valente said.

She was captured along with her two daughters and five Belgians. The Abu Nidal group claimed they were Israeli spies. Her whereabouts are not certain.

The children, then aged 7 and 6, were freed in December 1988, reportedly after Qadhafi intervened.

After their release, Qadhafi urged "liberation movements in the Middle East" to free the rest of the hostages.

The group has not been included on the list of Western hostages held in Lebanon. Eighteen Westerners, including eight Americans, are missing and presumed held captive.

Qadhafi said Tuesday Jewish emigrants could go to Alaska if they wished but not to Israel.

"Solving the problem of Jews lies in their remaining in their present countries and no state can be established on a religious basis," he said in a message to an Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference in Nicosia.

Otherwise, we propose an alternative homeland for them in the Baltic republics, Alaska, Alsace-Lorraine or on the Volga River. These are Jewish areas, not Palestine," he said in the message, the text of which was made available to Reuters.

By what right are Jews emigrating from their countries to Palestine? If the Jews are being persecuted in their countries this does not give them the right to persecute other people, namely the Palestinians," he said.

About half-a-million Soviet Jews are expected to move to Israel over the next few years. Arab states fear they will be settled in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to the detriment of Palestinian residents.

Chad says 330 rebels killed near Sudan

N'DJAMENA (R) — Chad said Wednesday government troops had killed 330 Libyan-backed guerrillas and captured 46 in fighting near the eastern border with Sudan.

An official statement said the army had retaken the Chadian villages of Bahai and Tine after an offensive launched Tuesday.

The government said forces of the "Islamic Legion" attacked the two villages near the town of Biltine on March 25. Chad says the group is supported by Libya.

The Chadian statement, issued by the military high command, did not give any figure for government casualties in the fighting, which was described as fierce.

Dozens of military vehicles, several weapons and other equipment were destroyed or seized, it said, adding that final figures were not yet available. Diplomatic sources said fighting could be continuing.

Chad last week accused Sudan

of "siding with the enemy" and President Hissene Habre vowed to destroy "all bases of the Islamic Legion and Libyan mercenaries."

Chad and Libya, which restored diplomatic relations in 1988, have fought several wars over a stretch of desert seized by Tripoli in 1973. They agreed in August 1989 to settle their claim to the Aouzou Strip within a year.

Israeli study calls for harsh economic pressure on Palestinians

TEL AVIV (R) — An Israeli think-tank has proposed the Jewish state increase economic pressure to break the Palestinian revolt in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Retired General Aryeh Shalev, author of the independent Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies' report, said Wednesday conflict with the Palestinians could be ended only through negotiations but first they must be forced to make concessions.

"My assessment is that the time is not right yet to begin serious negotiations," Shalev, who commanded Israeli forces in the West Bank from 1974 to 1976, told Reuters.

His study, "The Intifada: Causes and Effects," lists a series of harsh measures Israel could take to force Palestinians to abandon their present conditions for talks on the future of the occupied territories.

The proposals would mean further hardships for the 1.75 million Palestinians who have already suffered a sharp fall in living standards during the 28-month-long uprising against Israeli rule.

Shalev suggested halting Palestinian work from working in

the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Money is being brought in by individuals and various organisations working with Palestinians.

"In my estimate, they succeeded in smuggling in \$100 to \$300 million in the past year," said the senior researcher at the Jaffee Institute, part of Tel Aviv University.

Shalev said peace negotiations could only succeed if the revolt was ended and Palestinians abandoned key demands such as including the PLO in any negotiations.

Above all, he said, Palestinians would have to accept that the outcome of any peace talks was not fixed, dropping their demand that negotiations must lead to Palestinian independence.

Shalev appears to have toughened his attitude in this latest report. A few months ago he wrote that Israeli leaders were unrealistic to believe that peace with Palestinians was possible without talking to the PLO.

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New press law in the making — Izzeddine

AMMAN (J.T.) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sulaiman Arar Wednesday called for the formation of a special committee of the Jordan Press Association (JPA) made up of members with long professional experience to deal with all issues pertaining to the press.

Speaking on Jordan Television, Arar called on all journalists to respect the law which controls relations between journalists themselves, protects the profession of journalism and regulates the journalists' relations with others.

"Local newspapers have lately published strong criticism of the Lower House of Parliament's sessions and many journalists boycotted the last two sessions," Arar said.

Arar pointed out that Jordanian newspapers are free to publish anything even if it is directed against the executive authority and noted that Parliament had refrained from interfering in the newspapers' affairs when it came to publishing materials pertaining to the Lower House of Parliament.

But he said that Parliament has the right in particular situations to demand that the laws be re-

spected and nothing should be published about deliberations at secret Parliament sessions.

In reply, during the same television programme entitled "Meet the Press", Mahmoud Al Kayed, editor of the daily Al Ra'i said that it was not reasonable to ask the local press to refrain from publishing anything about a Parliament session. "Parliament's debates on corruption were referred to in the press, but not the actual discussions," Kayed explained.

He said that once a Parliament decision reaches the public prosecutor it is no secret any more. Late last month, Arar published a lengthy article in Al Ra'i criticising the press for publishing subjects related to the corruption issue discussed by Parliament.

Kayed published a reply justifying the press's stand. Following Parliament's criticism of the local press many journalists stayed away from Parliament's concluding sessions last month.

Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin said on the television programme that work was underway on a new publication law because the old one was in need of modernisation and revision.

PLO leader stresses need for joint stand

AMMAN (Petra) — A senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official ended a ten-day visit to Jordan Wednesday by calling for an urgent Arab summit to take steps in support of the Palestinian uprising and an Arab popular move to back such an urgent need.

"The Arab World should at the official and popular levels make it clear to the U.S. Congress, the American administration and all the enemies of the Arab World that Israel cannot have its way of subduing the uprising and cannot pursue its aggressive and expansionist policies at the expense of the Palestinian people's rights," Yasser Abed Rabbo said in a statement before leaving Amman.

Abed Rabbo, who is a member of the PLO's executive committee and head of the PLO's information department, was earlier received by His Majesty King Hussein to whom he delivered a message from Palestine President Yasser Arafat.

With reference to a decision by the U.S. Congress to grant Israel \$400 million to finance the settlement of Jewish immigrants, Abed Rabbo said that the move served as an open encouragement to extremism and aggression, and as part of Washington's ongoing policy of condoning Israel's expansionist plans.

"In the face of such an attitude on the part of the United States in support of Israel's aggression, and in view of Israel's continued occupation and repressive measures against the Palestinians, there is urgent need for a united Arab stand and a collective Arab action," Abed Rabbo added.

Abed Rabbo, who discussed with the King and Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin Palestinian-Jordanian relations

said that his visit to Jordan offered him a chance to discuss political and informational matters of common concern in relation to the intifada, and joint action.

Political discussions in Amman centred on issues pertaining to raising the level of PLO-Jordan coordinated work and joint action and cooperation with the Arab states confronting Israel, Abed Rabbo pointed out.

He said the main issue discussed was means of dealing with the Jewish immigration into Palestine from the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries.

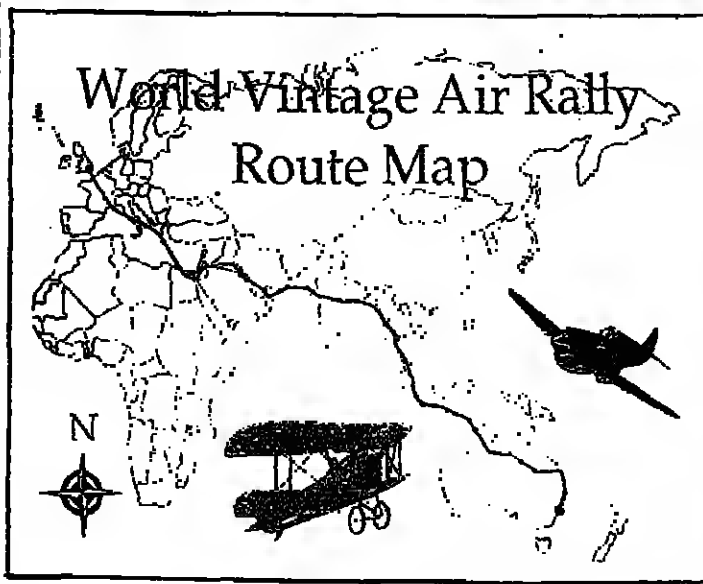
"The series of recent developments in the Middle East and the ongoing Western onslaught on Iraq make it imperative on the Arabs to convene an Arab summit which will no doubt have its beneficial effect on the Palestinian intifada and PLO's policies," Abed Rabbo said.

The PLO official said that Israel's ongoing hostile campaign against coordination between the PLO, Jordan and Iraq had intensified and had now been shifted into a campaign directed against Iraq for acquiring weapons for self-defence.

On the PLO's relations with Syria, Abed Rabbo said that they are quite normal and steadily progressing. "We expect to have meetings with the Syrians soon in the course of a process to improve ties still further," Abed Rabbo said.

"The PLO and Syria need to base their future relations on new foundations so that together, they can confront the common threats and dangers," Abed Rabbo added.

Minister of Information Ibrahim Izzeddin was among other officials to see Abed Rabbo off at the airport.



Economists union rallies behind Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Economists Association (JEA) Wednesday issued a statement condemning the ongoing hostile campaign against Iraq as being waged to subvert the Arab Nation, and called for 'closing Arab ranks behind Baghdad'.

"This campaign, which is being launched by imperialist circles in Britain, the United States and Israel is designed as a move to cover up for Israel's daily crimes committed against the Arab people of Palestine and to deviate world public attention from the situation in the occupied Arab territories," the statement said.

"The imperialist campaign aims to keep the Arab Nation in a weak state, unable to take a serious decision that would earn the Arab countries the respect of the world and support for the just Arab causes," the statement added.

Iraq, the statement said, has all the right to acquire all forms of weapons to defend its soil and its people against aggression and the Arab country ought to be supported and backed by all peace-loving nations in general and Arab states in particular.

It said that those behind the outcry against Iraq for acquiring weapons seem to have forgotten Israel's continued refusal to endorse an international nuclear non-proliferation treaty and tend to forget that Israel has a formidable arsenal of nuclear weapons, poisonous gas and other forms of weapons manufactured in cooperation with other countries hostile to the Arab Nation.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordan, Tunis strengthen cooperation

TUNIS (Petra) — Jordan's ambassador to Tunis, Talal Sataan Al Hassan, and Tunisian Minister of Economy and Finance Mohammad Al Ghanoushi held a meeting Wednesday to discuss bilateral cooperation in economic and commercial fields. Hassan said that he discussed with the Tunisian minister arrangements for a Jordanian industrial fair to be opened in Tunis on May 25, the Kingdom's independence day, ways to develop and increase the volume of trade exchange between the two countries and securing Tunisia's needs of Jordanian potash for the current year. The Jordanian ambassador held another meeting Wednesday with Tunisian Minister of Planning Mustapha Al Nabili in which he discussed with him bilateral relations and scopes of promoting and bolstering them.

Jordan to attend anti-drug conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in an international conference on curbing demands on drugs and combating use of cocaine to be convened in London next Monday. Jordan will be represented in the three-day conference by a delegation that will include the Jordanian ambassador to London and the Public Security Department (PSD) anti-narcotics section director.

Shaqa appointed counsellor

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Wednesday approved the secondment of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Zakat Fund Director Mohammad Ibrahim Shaqa to work at the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research — Al Al Bait Foundation — as a counsellor for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the academy's chairman. The Cabinet also approved the formation of the Hittiyah-Aqaba railway company board of directors made up of the minister of telecommunications and transport as chairman, the ministry's secretary general, the Aqaba Railway Company director general and representatives of the ministries of Finance, Awqaf and Planning and the private sector as members.

Faqir opens mosque annex

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Faqir Wednesday opened an annex for Al Nasr Mosque in Jabal Al Nasr. The mosque consists of three floors and includes a library. Local citizens have donated about JD 65,000 for building the annex.

Bashir addresses IPU conference

NICOSIA (Petra) — Deputy Awai Al Bashir, Wednesday, delivered Jordan's speech in the meetings of the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) conference convened in the Cypriot capital. Bashir reviewed in his speech, delivered before an anti-narcotics committee, the duties of the anti-narcotics department in Jordan, the problem of drug smuggling and the role of the press in making the society aware of the dangers of drugs. Bashir Wednesday attended a meeting of the Islamic parliamentary group taking part in the IPU conference. The meeting took a unanimous decision to hold a meeting to discuss Soviet Jewish immigration to Palestine.

Corporation gives loans to farmers

KARAK (Petra) — The Agricultural Credit Corporation presented JD 250,000 as loans to farmers in the Karak governorate during the first quarter of 1990. The organisation's Karak Director Khaled Mnjali said that 96 farmers benefited from these loans. He said that the farmers used the loans to hold agricultural projects, improve irrigated land and buy cattle and agricultural equipment.

Officials inspect food outlets

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Supply Nabil Abul Hoda, accompanied by senator Husni Ayyash and deputies Abdul Munem Abu Zant and Abdul Aziz Jabr, Wednesday visited the Civil Service Consumers Corporation (CSCC) and the Amman slaughter house and toured Amman markets.

Registration for pilgrims starts Saturday

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Pilgrimage Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs said that the pilgrims registration for this year pilgrimage season will start next Saturday April 7 and will continue until May 6. He said that Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Faqir would hold a press conference Thursday on this season's pilgrimage procedures and arrangements.

American journalists visit Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — A group of American businessmen and journalists including Barbara Walters arrived Wednesday at Aqaba. During a two-day private visit to the Kingdom the group will tour archaeological and historical sites in the south.

Vintage planes due in Amman

AQABA (J.T.) — Eighteen vintage aircraft taking part in the London-Sydney air rally arrived in Aqaba Wednesday and their crew were welcomed by Her Majesty Queen Noor, several members of the Royal family as well as the commander of the Jordanian Royal Air Force.

The vintage aircraft are due to fly to Amman Thursday and their 40-member group is expected to speak at a press conference on-

lining details of the trip which marks the 70th anniversary of the first single-engine light aircraft flight from London to Australia.

On their way to Amman the crew members will be taken on a trip to the Nabatean city of Petra and other archaeological sites within a programme organised by the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel which is hosting the group. Jordan is the sixth leg of the

trip which will take the crew six weeks to cover the distance to Sydney, Australia.

Taking off from London, the initial stage, the vintage craft flew to several destinations in France, Italy and Greece before stopping in Alexandria in Egypt and flying on to Aqaba.

Following the press conference in Amman, the crew will fly their vintage planes to Saudi Arabia on the next leg of their mission.

Good crops foreseen

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Meteorology Wednesday forecast a good harvest of crops in Jordan this year in the light of the quantities of rain that fell in different parts of the country.

Department director Ali Abanda said that there were 12 rainy days in March throughout the Kingdom followed by two days of heavy rain and light snow in the first week of April.

According to Abanda, Salt received the highest rate of rainfall from the beginning of the winter season and until now — quantities totalling 385 millimetres, followed by Ajloun, 346 millimetres.

He said that the least amount of rain in the winter season fell in the southern town of Maan, 27 millimetres.

The Department of Meteorology expects a rise in temperatures Thursday, reaching 20 degrees Centigrade, but cold nights with temperatures going down to around 3 degrees Centigrade.

The heavy rain and the snow which fell in Jordan over the past three days threatened the lives of almost 150 people, most of whom were rescued by civil defence men, according to a report in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday.

The paper said that among those cut off by the floods or snow were eight foreign tourists and three Jordanians carried away with their cars by the floods near Wadi Moussa.

Police report clues in major mosaic theft

AMMAN (J.T.) — Police have apprehended a number of people in connection with the theft of a mosaic floor from Qasr Al Hallabat, a desert castle dating back to the second century A.D.

The announcement about the theft, which took place last Sunday, was made only Tuesday and according to a police statement Wednesday, intensive investigation into the case led to the arrest of an unidentified number of people believed to be trading with antiquities and artifacts.

The statement said the police had found these people in illegal possession of pieces of antiquities and retrieved them for the benefit of the Department of Antiquities.

The statement said that Prime Minister Mudar Badran was personally concerned with the case and instructed the concerned police authorities and the Department of Antiquities to step up efforts to capture the people behind the theft and those dealing with stolen Jordanian artifacts.

Police said Tuesday that thieves stole an Islamic mosaic floor from Qasr Al Hallabat and that the government was offering a handsome reward to anyone providing information that could lead to its recovery.

The stolen mosaic piece is 30 square metres in size, representing "the tree of life" and a variety of animal, human, floral and geometric motifs dating back to the Umayyad era in the first half of the eighth century A.D.

Minister of Tourism, Abdul Karim Al Kabarti, said that an alert went out to border points after the theft was discovered

Monday.

Department of Antiquities director Ghazi Bisheh also told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Wednesday, that the theft was the work of professionals who left no trace behind, not even tracks on the desert road.

He said that the thieves must have cut the mosaics into small pieces so that they could later sell them to antique and artifact collectors.

According to Bisheh, the caretaker at Qasr Al Hallabat was absent at the time of the theft, and the thieves made good use of the stormy weather condition.

"The thieves must have spent up to six hours inside the old castle to lift off the whole multi-colour piece of mosaic floor," Bisheh pointed out.

"This theft is considered a major crime against the country's cultural wealth and history and against the Arab and Islamic nation," Bisheh added.

He said it was unreasonable to ask the Department of Antiquities to be able to give protection to the over 5,000 archaeological sites in the Kingdom around the clock, largely due to financial reasons. It has been the practice of the department to get assistance from local people to protect the antiquities.

Bisheh said that some citizens have been in the practice of conducting illegal excavations at burial places taking out antiquities for purely commercial purposes and the department is taking strict measures to end this practice.

JEPSCO to change billing system

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bowing to consistent public demands and repeated complaints, the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPSCO) has decided to reconsider its current practice of assessing power consumption and will cancel the system as of the beginning of June 1990.

JEPSCO used to send out teams to read the meters once every three months before charging consumers for the first month's reading and charging them for an assessment of their consumption for the following two months.

The company's decision was announced Wednesday by the chairman of its board of directors Mohammad Ali Bdeir who admitted there were limited errors in meter reading and assessment.

"In response to numerous complaints from subscribers, JEPSCO has decided to do away with the present system as of June 1990," Bdeir announced in a statement at a press conference.

He pointed out that the errors did not exceed one in a thousand and that the company is now supplying power to over 320,000 subscribers, increasing annually at the rate of 12,000.

Bdeir complained that certain subscribers had been in the habit of delaying payment, prompting the company to disconnect their power supply until they settle their dues for a minimal fee of JD 2.5.

Bdeir said that overall, dues on subscribers now stand at more than JD 9.5 million and at the same time the company is committed to pay JD 100,000 daily to the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) for the power it obtains to supply the subscribers.

According to Bdeir, the company now holds JD 7,648,138 deposited in advance payments by subscribers as guarantees, but the public owes the company a total of JD 9,730,899 according to final accounts for 1989.

Aqaba takes the lead in observing Earth Day

AQABA (J.T.) — The port of Aqaba is probably the first Jordanian city to respond to a call for cleanliness and for providing protection to the environment following an announcement that the Kingdom will join the community of nations in observing Earth Day which falls on April 22.

On that day, a worldwide celebration of the environment will be held in many parts around the globe, and Jordan will mark the day with a nation-wide campaign to remove garbage and keep the country side, the roads and the surroundings of the city clean and healthy.

Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) president, Bassam Qaqish, said at a special meeting

called to review plans for the occasion that a cleanliness campaign will be launched to cover the coast area, the inside of the city and the suburbs. "The campaign will involve all citizens working for or employed by organisations, schools, commercial and business centres and the port corporation," he said.

The campaign in Jordan is organised by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature with the purpose of involving citizens in protecting the environment.

Part from seminars and posters to make the people aware of the need to have a clean and green country, the society has made plans for up to 20,000



A design by Matek Kabarti

students to take part in removing garbage, old tyres and generally cleaning different areas around the country.

Dead Sea statue — myth or reality?

By Mariam Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Could it be that a statue of salt-encrusted stone on a cliff above the Dead Sea is actually a fossil from Biblical times?

Leaving it up to the imagination of visitors, a team of Friends of Archaeology along with Jordanian philantropist Arslan Ramadan and officials from the Ministry of Tourism set out for the Dead Sea last Friday to look at the statue which has not attracted too many tourists till now.

Tourism Ministry officials say that the statue — or whatever it really is could be used as a tourist attraction. Ramadan, who photographed the statue and led last Friday's expedition, said that it "definitely" could be a fossil statue of the wife of Lot (Genesis 19) who, according to the Bible, was transformed into a pillar of salt for looking back towards Sodom, in disobedience of the Lord's orders.

Ramadan's supposition is not the first of its kind since Ralph E. Baney published a picture of the same stone statue on the Dead Sea in 1962 when he was searching for Sodom and Gomorrah, and the Jordanian photographer Zohrab made a postcard of the statue inscribed 'Sodom and Gomorrah'.

Jordanian tourism officials are sceptical about the actual significance of the statue:

"Looking at it from one side it looks like a woman walking out of the Dead Sea," said Nassi Attallah of the Ministry of Tourism.

"At this point," Attallah said "no one can say that it is the statue of the wife of Lot — the statue resembles a woman with a long arm carrying an arm bag and walking out of the Dead Sea."

He said that geologists supposed that the water level could have been at the level of the statue's feet around 2000 B.C.

The rock formation with the ussany resemblance of Lot's wife could easily be used as a tourist attraction. "After all in the middle of the Egyptian desert there is a rock formation that looks like Teddy Kennedy and many tourists visit that — so why not see this," Attallah said.

He pointed out that while "no-one can claim that the statue is actually of the wife of Lot, no-one has proven otherwise."

According to Attallah "excavation teams have been searching in and around the Dead Sea since the 1960's, if not before, to look for remnants of one or more of the Biblical five cities of the plain, but so far to no avail."

The 'story'

Sodom and Gomorrah are thought to be two of the "five cities of the plain" which are



The centerpiece of the controversy

mentioned in several Biblical accounts in the 'Book of Genesis'.

According to Biblical and archaeological scholars, the Bible provides clues to the location of the five cities, which may not have existed all at the same time. However, the

"clues" indicate that the location could be either in the north or the south-east of the Dead Sea.

The existence and consequent destruction of Sodom is estimated to be anywhere from 2,400 B.C. to 1,800 B.C.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- * An exhibition by seven Iraqi artists at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (10 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
- * Art exhibition by Ahmad Nawash at the French Cultural Centre.
- * Exhibition entitled "Man and Land" by Jordanian artist Khalil Ghawamneh at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- * Exhibition entitled "The Productive Families" displaying antiques, ceramics, wooden clothes and foodstuffs at Al Qadisiyya Community College.
- * The Islamic book exhibition which includes books on Islam, literature, psychology, sociology, education, philosophy, law and history at Yarmouk University.
- * Art and craft exhibition by inter-schools at the Royal Cultural Centre (opens Friday).

THEATRE

- * Arabic children's play entitled "Tales from My Grandmother's Chest" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 10:00 a.m.

CONCERT

- * Concert by the folk art troupe at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8:30 p.m.

FILM

- * Feature film entitled "An American in Paris" at the American Centre — 3:00 p.m.

RAMADAN QUIZ

- * The annual Ramadan quiz of the AUB alumni club at Amra hotel — 9:00 p.m.

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Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/5, 670141-4, 684311, 684366

Telex: 21487 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

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Simmer comes to boil

THE AGE of mass destructive weapons and rocketry has dawned on the Middle East with a vengeance. Israel launched Tuesday its second satellite into orbit in the wake of Iraq's pledge to meet Israel's threats with a comparable one. Iraq's missile capabilities are not much behind those of Israel, and Syria, Saudi Arabia and Egypt are known to possess immense capabilities in this domain as well. God knows how many more countries in the Middle East have or will soon have such weaponry in their arsenals. Of course, the reason for this proliferation of mass destructive weapons in the Middle East and their means of delivery is the fact that the two principal conflicts in the Middle East, namely, the Palestinian problem and the Iran-Iraq conflict, were left to simmer and boil for decades.

Had the superpowers in particular and the international community in general acted more seriously to defuse these conflicts right at the outset instead of fanning them in one way or another and then acted in concert to bring them to a resolution, there would not have been any reason to introduce such sophisticated weaponry to this region in the first place. Now the big powers of the world have only themselves to blame for the rapid deterioration in these two situations to such an extent that the next round of war, if and when it occurs, will involve mass destructive weapons delivered by long-range rockets. But now that the genie is out of the bottle there is no effective way to reverse the tide of mass destructive weapons in the Middle East, be they nuclear or chemical or biological. The only way left is to make sure that such weapons will never be used. The nations of the world, including Middle Eastern countries, are in a race with time: Either to let the momentum generated by the introduction of such weapons dictate the policies of the region and force on them an unwinnable war or to act more expeditiously to resolve these simmering conflicts with all the necessary will and determination. There is no doubt that it is within the power of the big nations to do something effective as far as these regional conflicts are concerned. The Arab-Israeli conflict, especially its Palestinian dimension, need not and should not be left unresolved for long. In the past the two superpowers were warring with one another and that was the excuse for not putting their heads together to enforce a legitimate solution on the parties concerned. Now that they are in league they have no more justification for not resolving this conflict. The same applies to the Iran-Iraq conflict. There was a time when the Washington-Moscow rivalry had kept this conflict on fire. Fortunately, these two powerful countries can now act in concert to put an effective end to this conflict as well. Will the big powers shoulder this challenge before rockets carrying mass destructive weapons are fired all over the region?

This is the crux of the problem now.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

His Majesty King Hussein has refuted the falsehoods of the U.S. Senate which announced its recognition of Jerusalem as the united capital of Israel, said Al Rai Arabic daily in an editorial Wednesday. The King has made it clear that what has been based on something null and void will itself be illegitimate and wrong, and that the Senate's decision was unjust because it was based on illegitimate justifications, the paper added. It said that the Senate's decision reflects disregard to international law and political blindness with regard to the most sensitive issue in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Over the years, all U.S. administrations have displayed commitment to the fact that East Jerusalem is part of the occupied Arab territories which means total rejection of occupation and annexation because such annexation is rejected by the international community and is considered illegal, the paper pointed out. It said that the U.S. Senate has now reversed this situation, which simply means rejecting U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 which in turn means adopting an attitude hostile to peace and all efforts leading to that peace. The paper said this creates a very serious situation because it places the Arabs face to face with the remaining alternative: to regain their rights and their lands by force.

A columnist in Al Rai Arabic daily voices support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's announcement that he will use chemical weapons against Israel should it launch an adventure against Iraq. Tarek Mizarweb says the Arabs have the right to defend themselves with all means available to them whenever they are attacked. The writer reminds his readers that it was the Americans who first used chemical weapons in Vietnam to kill the Vietnamese people and destroy their cities and forests at a time when the so-called free world kept silent and did not protest this action. When then should we be afraid to announce our intention to defend ourselves with our weapons if exposed to an external attack? asks Mizarweb. He notes that the Arabs are now fighting for survival and to defend their lands from occupation and aggression, and therefore they have the right to use any weapon. In his speech television, continues the writer, Saddam Hussein has clearly exposed the ill-intentions of Israel and its allies and exposed the U.S.-British-Israeli conspiracy and told the world of his intention to defend his country.

Dwelling on King Hussein's statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Al Dastour daily said that the U.S. Senate's decision was a strange incidence in form and in content and more so in its timing. The Senate's decision above all was total contradiction to the U.S. official stand since 1967, and Washington's regard of Jerusalem as an integral part of the occupied Arab lands, the paper noted. The paper echoed the King's words that the Senate's decision, considering the holy city as the united capital of Israel, was harmful to the on-going efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and conflicting with the will of the international community which had endorsed U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 that clearly denounces any annexation or occupation of other countries' territories by force of arms.

Is Sudan jettisoning south?

Unwanted war, unwanted victory

By David Hirst

KHARTOUM — THE taxi driver said laconically: "He prays a lot." He was speaking of General Omar Al Bashir, Chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council of Sudan.

The piety is to be expected, because Gen. Bashir presides over what is gradually emerging as the first Khomeini-style Islamic fundamentalist regime in the Arab World.

But it is less and less on the Almighty that he relies than on the tanks which guard his barracks in the centre of Khartoum. Never have new Sudanese rulers proclaimed such lofty ideals, only to fall into such swift discredit.

It all began on the night of June 29, with a touch of comic opera. Because one of the new regime's leading lights is the army's chief physician, it was some 150 men of the medical corps, along with the music corps, who played a key role in disposing of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi and his "democratic period."

It was not clear at first who these faceless army officers were, but before long there could be no doubt: the fundamentalist National Islamic Alliance (NIA), led by Hassan Turabi, had masterminded the putsch.

It was the prospect of an imminent end to Sudan's long-running civil war — between the Arab, mainly Muslim north and the non-Arab, non-Muslim south — which prompted the Islamic radicals to act. For peace, on the terms agreed by Sadeq's ruling coalition, would have undermined their whole theocratic design for the Sudan.

The war poisons political life and drains an already beggared economy. Though the junta immediately proclaimed its interest in peace, in practice it made reconciliation impossible. So it is now waging war more strenuously, yet more ineffectually, than ever.

That bodes very ill for Sudan, that combined with the new rulers' other manifold perversities. "You will never understand these people," said a dismissed civil servant, "unless you start from the premise that they are quite simply very stupid, irrational, inexperienced, fanatical and loath." They call themselves Islamic, but in reality they are installing a new *Jahiliyyah* (the age of ignorance that preceded Islam).

It is a harsh judgment from which it is nonetheless very hard to find a dissenting voice among Khartoum's liberal, secular intelligentsia.

Though small, the NIA is also very rich. It is well-organised and purposeful, as extremists often are. Its wealth comes not merely from the "fundamentalist international," but from inside Sudan.

One of the key concessions it wrung in the early 1980s from an embattled President Ja'afar Numeiri as the price of its support was the establishment of an Islamic banking sector. Authorised by special presidential decree, the Faisal Islamic Bank, Saudi-sponsored but forbidden in Saudi Arabia itself, flourished mightily thanks to a battery of unique privileges. It is organically linked to the NIF.

The NIF is led by some seasoned, often well-heeled politicians in the Turabi mould, but its rank and file — narrow, zealous and prone to violence and intimidation — are drawn mainly from a newly urbanised lower middle class. Much of its invective is directed against those who represent traditional wealth and privilege. It magnifies their abuses in the same way as it does the "communism" and "atheism" of the secular, modernist intelligentsia.

"These people," said a university professor, "think that it is the believer's duty to work for an Islamic state wherever possible, on top of a mountain if necessary. That is what they have learned from Egyptian fundamentalist ideologues whose works they study. Substitute northern Sudan for the top of a mountain and you have their ambition in a nutshell."

The civil war lends to this utopian zealotry particularly drastic implications. One is a readiness, which Gen. Bashir has openly alluded to, to let the south secede if that is the only way to preserve the cohesion and integrity of the north.

None of this amounts to a formal programme, apparently unwilling to show its full fundamentalist face, the junta has simply never issued one. It is less the regime's policies — groping, improvised and incoherent — which reveal its NIF identity, than the way it is consolidating its grip on state and civil institutions.

It is eradicating all that is modern, secular, liberal or democratic from public life. After outlawing political parties, professional

associations and trade unions and banning newspapers, the junta is purging the administration, either by packing it with NIF loyalists or creating entirely new, "parallel" institutions.

At least 600 army officers — many of whom had been agitating for an end to an unwinnable war — and 400 police officers have been dismissed. The civil service has suffered huge, extremely damaging losses. Among the new institutions, at least one has a distinctly Iranian flavour and NIF men are known to have undergone courses in the Islamic Republic.

Newly established "popular committees" were initially presented as friendly neighbourhood bodies, but they quickly assumed a security role, empowered to eavesdrop and arrest. More sinister is the Revolutionary Security, with its secret detention centres, where people are tortured before being handed over to the regular state security.

Then there are the Popular Defence Forces. These are the tribal militias which were originally encouraged under the Sadeq administration, but have been legalised as defence forces under this one.

"These people think that it is the believer's duty to work for an Islamic state wherever possible, on top of a mountain if necessary. That is what they have learned from Egyptian fundamentalist ideologues whose works they study. Substitute northern Sudan for the top of a mountain and you have their ambition in a nutshell."

The militias have been employed as auxiliaries to the army in its war against the southerners. Unruly and self-serving, they have used their status to prosecute their own conflicts, typically over grazing and water rights, and, in the assurance of immunity from punishment, they have carried out fearful massacres.

Khartoum is now getting its own Popular Defence unit, ostensibly open to all volunteers but in reality the NIF's own militia, and latest reports indicate that it has acquired tanks through its accomplices in the regular army, to which it is conceived as a counterweight.

The regime's key objective is to reimpose the *Sharia*, the Muslim holy law, first introduced at the NIF's instigation under Col. Numeiri, in its full rigour. The *Sharia* has always been the main obstacle to a negotiated settlement of the war.

Colonel John Garang and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), with the support of the "national alliance" of northern political parties and unions, have insisted that Sudan revert to its secular constitution. The NIF's idea, held to be unworkable by its critics, is that, to overcome the hostility of the non-Muslim south, the *Sharia* should be applied in the north only, or, if nationally, only to Muslims.

The NIF is also bent on strengthening the Arab character of the country, calling, for example, for the "immediate" Arabisation of education, without any prospect of furnishing the southerners with the means of learning the language.

There is a growing campaign to expel southerners from Khartoum. Driven there by war and hunger, they are encamped in shanty towns around it. The NIF portrays them, in racist terms, as a "black belt" strangling the city, as a "secret army" that will one day rampage through it and rape its women.

On the two main issues over which it took its predecessors to task, the war and the economy, the junta's record is poor and potentially disastrous.

On the war front, it is in disarray. It has turned the struggle into a full-scale jihad, even though the thinly spread, badly equipped, demoralised army is less capable than ever of waging one.

The SPLA continues to take ground, bringing the southern capital, Juba, under siege, and generally going on the offensive in the dry season that traditionally favours the government side. In apparent tactical deference to Col. Garang, the junta has main-

tained the previous regime's freeze on the *Sharia* including amputation of limbs, a thoroughly unconvincing gesture when all its rhetoric suggests that enforcement is its ultimate aim.

On the one hand, Gen. Bashir visits Khartoum and Nairobi in the hope of talking to Col. Garang, who humbly spurs him. On the other, he goes to Tripoli to conclude a "union" with Libya, in the knowledge that the termination of such alliances with Arab countries has always been one of Col. Garang's conditions for peace.

The northern, mainly secular opposition and the SPLA have been thrown more closely together behind the common aims of democracy, pluralism and preserving the unity of the country. The opposition fears that the NIF's surreptitious ambition is actually to destroy the army in the south, leaving itself undisputed master of the north, where it can establish the Islamic Republic of (a very much diminished) Sudan.

On the economic front, things are likewise worse than ever. The junta has made a great show of combating some types of corruption and penalising profiteers, two of whom it hanged after arbitrary secret trials. But it has done nothing to tackle the conditions in which such practices flourish.

It has only frightened the private sector into sullen paralysis. The repatriation of desperately needed hard currency has been reduced to a trickle; industry is running at 15 per cent of capacity or less; agricultural output, especially of the staple sorghum, has nosedived to its lowest level ever.

The junta favours Islamic banks and businesses: it mocks the International Monetary Fund, of which Sudan is the world's largest debtor, and antagonises aid-giving Western governments and agencies.

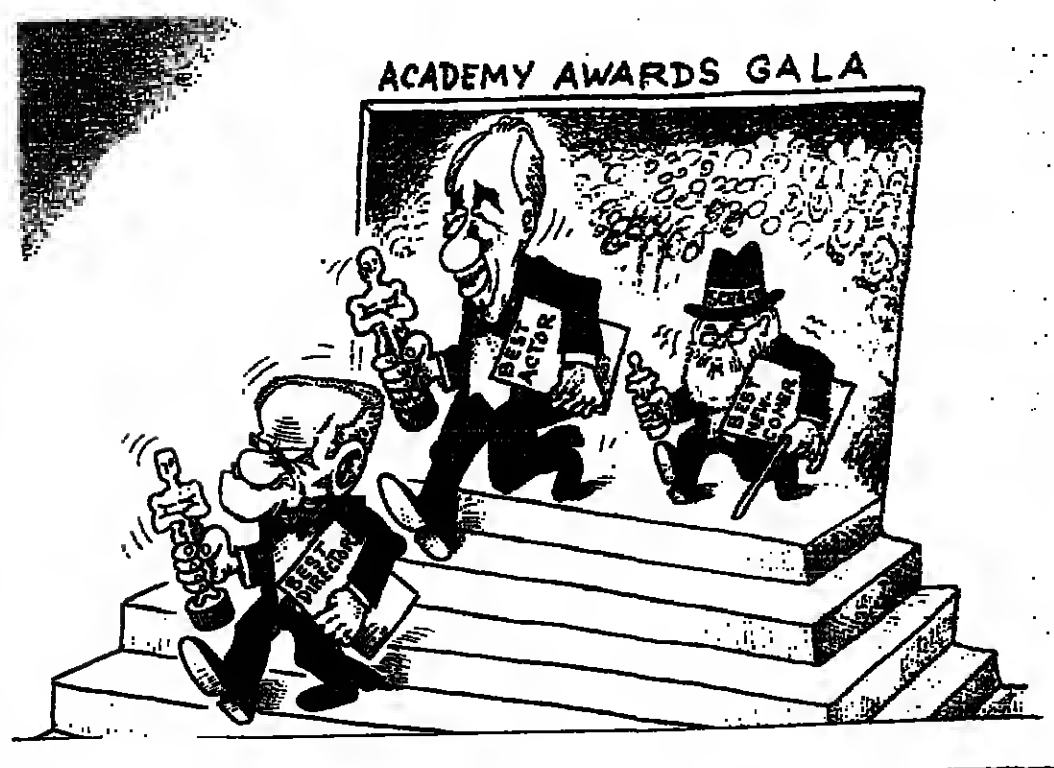
"With the wholesale price of sorghum now seven times what it normally is at this time of the year," said a farmer, "starvation is near. But the government just closes its eyes, pretending all is well. Its policies ensure that next year's crop will be even worse."

With Colonel Moammar Qadhafi just about its only remaining friend, the junta is hopelessly isolated.

Col. Garang and the northern opposition are counting on general unrest leading to the kind of spontaneous popular uprising which has been known to bring down dictatorships.

But people are afraid, for these are holy warriors of a type they have never known before. Gen. Bashir's tanks await the uprising. The first fundamentalist government in the Arab World is unlikely to yield power easily.

Sudan has crushed a coup conspiracy and arrested servicemen and civilians trying to oust the military government, state-run Radio Omdurman said March 28 — The Guardian.



Egypt- heading towards elections?

By Maurice Gaimin
 The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — The constitutionality of Egypt's parliament is under fire in a court challenge that could lead to elections by this summer, two years before they're due.

The accompanying political row is typical of what Egyptians face in a continuing struggle to work out the kinks in a still-imperfect democratic system.

Egypt has come a long way from the single-party dominance that prevailed for more than two decades after Gamal Abdul Nasser overthrew King Farouk in 1952.

Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, restored the multi-party system in the late 1970s, and allowed publication of newspapers proclaiming the opposition parties' message — though Sadat became impatient with their criticism and periodically cracked down.

It was during one of those crackdowns on dissent that Sadat was assassinated in 1981 by Muslim extremists.

Hosni Mubarak, who then came to the presidency, has since given government opponents wide-ranging freedom to criticise. They have made full use of it.

Scathing attacks in opposition newspapers frequently lead to shouting matches with state-owned publications. The two-way mud-slinging often spills over onto the parliamentary floor, where there have been opposition walkouts — and even a few scuffles.

The government considers the parliamentary and media fights a safety valve, to have the opposition "let off steam," as one official put it.

But Egypt's politics remain dominated by a strong presidency which practically monopolises foreign policy, while in domestic affairs, he keeps close tabs on the prime minister and his cabinet.

The administration's backbone is the National Democratic Party's 75-plus per cent majority in the 458-seat legislature, or people's assembly. The party can outvote the opposition anytime — though the opposition, with almost 100 seats, is the largest since republican Egypt began with Nasser's coup.

Kamal Khalid, 59, a lawyer registered as an independent, began the current political free-for-all with a suit in constitutional court renewing an earlier challenge he had raised to an often-amended election law that dates from 1972, during the early Sadat years.

Khalid quickly found like-minded comrades within Egypt's five opposition parties.

They want the court to rule that the election code violates constitutional guarantees of equal opportunity — and they want voting districts to be redrafted to ensure proportional balance between numbers of voters and numbers of parliamentary seats. Then they want new elections.

An advisory panel of jurists attached to the seven-member constitutional court recommended in a non-binding opinion that the court uphold Khalid's objections to the election law. The seven-member tribunal, the ultimate arbiter of Egypt's basic law, is expected to rule by early June.

Under the constitution, the president can dissolve parliament only with the electorate's approval.

In 1987, a similar challenge by Khalid of the same election law prompted Mubarak to disband the assembly and call elections.

Mubarak made the moves, however, before the court upheld Khalid's suit contesting parts of the election law.

The referendum endorsed dissolution and elections went ahead two months later, in April 1987. The newly-elected assembly then nominated Mubarak for a second six-year term in October 1987, and he was endorsed by the voters in another referendum.

Many thought at the time that Mubarak acted quickly without risking an adverse court ruling because of the impending presidential nomination. This time, no urgent business is pending.

Opposition parties are campaigning strongly in their newspapers to have the assembly dissolved.

"The court is in the throes of a constitutional dilemma," said Hilmy Murad, a former cabinet minister and among leaders of the assembly's largest opposition bloc. "The only way out is to disband the assembly and have new elections."

Opposition leader Murad said his 60-seat Socialist Labour Party parliamentary alliance favours a scenario beginning with dissolution and elections. Then Mubarak would amend the electoral law by decree and submit it to the new people's assembly for approval.

But Ibrahim Nafei, a Mubarak's confident and editor of the leading newspaper Al Ahram, said tersely: "There can be no invalidation of the people's assembly."

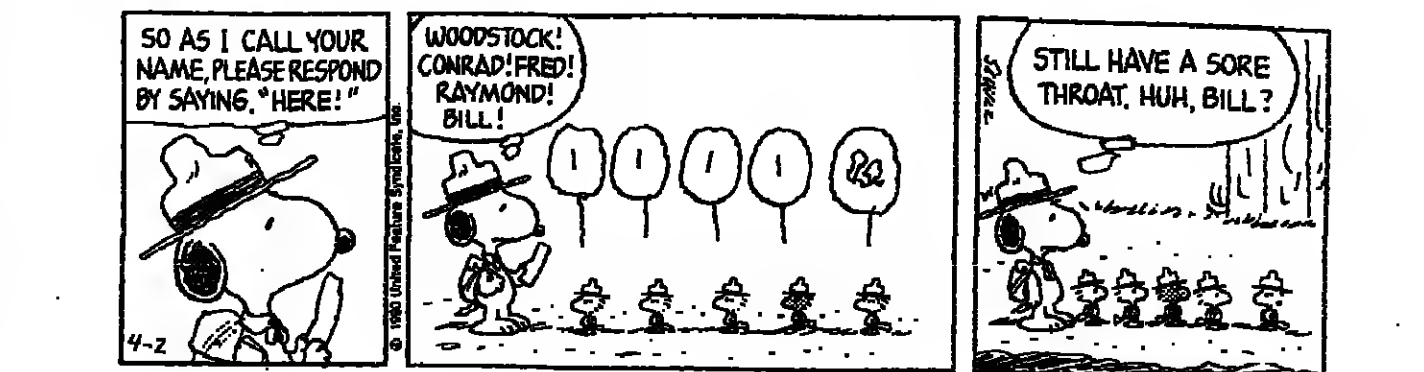
Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



Khleifi's new film makes Palestinian pain under occupation felt

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With his blue jeans, casual shirt, longish black hair and his black leather bag, Palestinian-born film director Michel Khleifi appears somewhat Bohemian and very close to the heart at first encounter.

It has been quite an experience getting to know this artist, for he has a way with words that induces mental and intellectual stimulation. He does not pretend to be clever with words: He is simply very sensitive, brilliantly analytical and has a personality that charms people.

Each day, Khleifi revealed new qualities about himself that could only gain him respect, for the man has some outstanding features that are strongly apparent in his films screened this week in Amman, one of which was a premiere of his latest, *Nasheed Al Hajar* (Ballad of the Stone), about the Palestinian uprising.

The Jordanian and Palestinian public in the Kingdom have finally been introduced to Khleifi's films ten years after his first production, *Images of Fertile Memories*, which won him the Best First Film Award at the Carthage Film Festival in Tunisia.

Many find it ironic that a Palestinian director, who has gained international recognition for his films on Palestine, has not gained the same attention that he actually deserves in a country nearest geographically and somewhat culturally to Palestine. "But what is important is that the films did arrive, though temporarily, thanks to the cinema committee of Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation

and the Popular Committee for the Support of the Intifada who brought the films and invited the director to talk to the public.

"It's unfortunate that it took me so long to come to Jordan to present my films, but I'm very pleased and honoured to present my latest film in Jordan for the first time," Khleifi told a full-house at the Philadelphia Cinema last Sunday at the intifada fund-raiser premiere of *Nasheed Al Hajar*.

Born in Nazareth in 1950, Khleifi lived in Belgium for the last 20 years studying and making films. Yet he still retains his northern Palestinian accent and continues to stay close to the Palestinian and Arab culture, old and new.

"Though Nazareth is only two hours from Amman, it's unfortunate that I had to go to Belgium first to be able to come and meet you in Jordan after so many years. Hopefully we will all meet next time in Nazareth," Khleifi, a Belgian citizen, told the applauding audience before *Nasheed* was screened.

Shock and Guilt were clearly seen on the faces of the audience leaving the theatre, for Khleifi was successful in his attempt to make the Palestinian pain under occupation felt by the bourgeois viewers.

All Khleifi's feature films, including *Images of Fertile Memories* and *Wedding in Galilee*, created a controversy in the Arab World. Images portrays two types of Palestinian women: An old woman (who is actually his aunt) representing tradition and a younger divorcee, (writer Sahar Khalifeh) representing change and development. *Wedding in Galilee* was



Michel Khleifi speaks to the press. Also present is Jordanian film critic Adnan Mideanat.

Another controversy?

Nasheed will perhaps create another controversy, as was evident by some of those who saw the film Sunday.

Not being used to such sophisticated style of filmmaking, some believed that "it was a good propaganda for us in the West."

Nasheed is part documentary and part drama depicting a realistic Palestinian life during the intifada and under occupation, as well as a parallel dramatised dialogue between a couple who are reunited as a result of the uprising.

The dialogue is written by Khleifi himself in classical Arabic verses and the actors say the words matter-of-factly in a monotone style. This was not accepted by some viewers, "because it made no sense within the context of the film."

Perhaps seeing the film for the first time gives this impression of the dialogue. But seeing it a second time, one realises that the viewer must really concentrate to understand the beauty of the conversation and its significance within the theme of liberation from oppression, be it oppression of the Israeli occupation or the society.

Khleifi explains that the actors' delivery of the script is something he did purposely. "I put hysterical and emotional acting aside to enable the basic ideas of the script to directly reach the viewer. Besides, people deal with their daily lives from within themselves, internally rather than externally," he says.

In his film, Khleifi does not portray the "festive atmosphere of the intifada." "But I attempted to show the human angle of the pain and suffering of the individuals under Israeli occupation," Khleifi told the Jordan Times WEEKENDER.

"What matters to me when I make a film is the interpretation of the human situation that leads to the slogans and the television image we see of the event (intifada)," he says. "A real film is not just dealing with a certain political event, but rather one based on the daily life by delving into the human elements involved which lead to the political event."

Khleifi's initial idea for the uprising film was to portray the pain of children of Palestinian martyrs, but as each day passed, "I realised I had to show the pain of all those under occupation, because the pain is shared by everyone there."

"I could have gone out and filmed the demonstrations, for example, or just went ahead with my initial idea. But I

realised that the pain was everywhere, repeating itself. I also used the testimonies of freed prisoners and absorbed them in what the male character says," Khleifi explains.

He wrote the script everyday while he was filming, as new information and ideas unfolded, giving new and un-repetitive dimensions to the reality as he envisioned it.

Passion for Palestine

Many Arabs believe that Khleifi's style is "too European," but when asked who his target audience is when making a film, he said: "When there is a water spring, it is for all those who drink from it. I don't have a problem with that. I make a film because it forces itself on me and because of the love and passion I have for my country."

The passion and closeness Khleifi has for Palestine and humanity is truly overwhelming, for his films, especially *Images* and *Nasheed*, show his personal sensitivity to the way he handles the beauty of the people and nature. The films, like his personality, move the audience to a point that makes them try to become better human beings.

Let us just hope that such a free and inspiring talent would receive the support of Palestinians and the Arabs at large in making more such films that appear to emerge from his soul, for we want to continue seeing his works. And hopefully, the Arab audience would accept and support his freedom in making his films. As he says: "I always defend and protect my freedom when making a film, and my personal freedom. Because the more I do that, the closer I get to Palestine."

Victims of the silent war

The Trap By Abdullah Eissa

Published by Dar El Ibbat Publishing and Distribution House
Price: JD 1.50, 1990, P.P. 118

By Hana Darwazah
Special to the Jordan Times

WHILE international reports carry condemnations of the killings of Palestinian "collaborators" in the Israeli

occupied Arab territories, the Trap comes as a light reading literary work of how many of these "collaborators" originally fell victim to the vicious war between the intelligence apparatus of the Palestine li-

beration movement and the Israelis.

A daring story, the Trap is a solid account of how Israel's intelligence tests, recruits, trains and exploits Palestinian youth.

International law bans the recruitment of minors in espionage work. The Trap digs into the files of the Palestinian intelligence apparatus to reveal the truth behind the fall of many Palestinian youth to the intricacies of the intelligence game waged by the Israelis.

The Arabic language novel-style book focuses on one particular young man, Marwan, for the duration of 14 years, from 1972 when he was recruited by the Israelis

Rachel, an Israeli female agent.

As shown by the author, the same method of entrapment is used again and again with slight variations throughout the story but when unsuccessful with the "greed" element, agents resorted to the use of drugs.

Human tragedy and personal reward were presented by the author as the obvious results of fighting the Israeli tactics. The two females who resisted Jean's attempts to recruitment had two different ends to their stories. While one killed herself to protect her family's honour, the other confessed and immediately

married a young man from her village to cover her predicament.

Marwan is eventually imprisoned in Jenin Prison by his superior officer, Jean, as a ploy to infiltrate Palestinian resistance inside the prisons. By then the nationalist movement had Marwan's name on its list of traitors and he was of little use to his Israeli employers.

The method by which Marwan was killed highlights the tragedy and insignificance of his greed. He is strangled by Palestinian prisoners with a shoe lace.

The Trap reveals to its

readers the strong Palestinian networks and the organised work that takes place within the prisons. Decisions are made by the Palestinian leadership and passed on to the various committees of prisoners in the form of tiny capsules (tiny pieces of papers wrapped in plastic). Even Marwan's execution is carried out by members of Force 17, an organised committee to annihilate traitors, who work in Israeli prisons.

"The Trap is a historical document that focuses on the silent war that is still taking place between the Palestinians and the Israeli intelligence networks."

Hugs and 'legitimate hugs'

By Sand G. Hattar

THE SCENE is set. A man and a woman realise that they are in love. They move closer to each other; their eyes locked; and the world of words is said in silence: a perfect romantic ambience, vintage wine, white satin and a red-light setting. The low-toned syncopated beat suggests the love is about to be sealed with a kiss; but, cut, the scene ends here. Blank! The two had by now settled in a convertible red sports car winding their way on a highway.

The scene changes; the two are now in legitimate wedlock and have obtained a marriage certificate. Well; that document seems to give credence, legitimacy to a hug; beamed to dazed viewers who had by now lost track of the first scene which must have seen its way to the censor's bin.

Well let's think it over. What is the difference between the first hug and the "legitimate" hug? Both are part of a TV scene, a fairy tale that is shot to be presented as a comprehensible piece of action rather than bits and pieces of film footage.

The other day an ultra-conservative deputy called the TV management at 10.30 p.m. and launched an attack on the station for showing not-too-conservative scenes, including a kiss. Utterly confused, the management, it was said, sought to heal the damage but only to find out that the show beamed that evening had no emotional settings. Nor did it have anything to do with romance but it was rather a documentary on war and peace.

It took the deputy 20 minutes to call the station again with apologies and regrets. "Excuse me the obscene film is being beamed from the station in a neighbouring country."

The morality behind cutting the "bad" scenes is to keep them away from the eyes of teenagers. But, in the process, adults find it difficult to follow a scene completely distorted and lopsided.

While acknowledging the morality behind censorship, it would be fair and logical to cut bad scenes before 10:00 p.m. and lift censorship, at least partially, after 10:00 when only adults watch — Adults who don't blush from a kiss.

BOOK REVIEW

as a 15-year-old boy until 1984 when he was eventually caught and executed by Palestinians inside an Israeli prison.

The simple style of the author, Abdullah Eissa, is more than compensated for by the incredible facts presented in this story. Eissa is presumably privy to inside information from Palestinian intelligence sources, because he presents his readers with irrefutable facts citing names, places, dates and events.

The writer is obviously not sympathetic to the plight of his lead character. He portrays him as a greedy and weak person creating a contrast with two other targeted Palestinian females who resisted the temptations and blackmail of the Israeli agents.

Jean, the Israeli intelligence officer in charge of Marwan's recruitment, enticed him with money and women, playing on his greed and finally entrapping him with photos of his affair with

عن ملفات المخابرات الفلسطينية

المصيدة

تمت بحمد المخابرات الأردنية
سند غ. حطار

Diary

By Norneen Murad

Yasser Abed Rabbo, head of the Information Department at the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), arrived in Jordan the week before last ostensibly for a "two-day visit and talks on information coordination with Jordan." Obviously, Abed Rabbo found more than information coordination, since at the end of the two days, it became evident, at least to some political analysts, that Jordanian-Palestinian relations have discovered new horizons for cooperation. Ten days after he arrived, Abed Rabbo was still in Amman accepting invitations from old friends and relatives. Other than an official dinner (before Ramadan started) given in his honour by the minister of information, Abed Rabbo attended iftars hosted by personalities like Senator Jaafar Shami, former member of parliament Daoud Suleiman and businessman Ali Mango, and maybe some others as well. To be fair though, Abed Rabbo did have other legitimate reasons to stay behind after his official visit ended. First, his 39 year old brother Khalid has just passed away and he had to be here to accept condolences from Jordanian and Palestinian officials as well as from friends and relatives. Secondly, it was rumoured that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat might be arriving to Jordan very soon, and Abed Rabbo had been waiting for him to join in his delegations. However, it seems Abed Rabbo had tired of waiting for his boss, so he left by the middle of this week.

* * *

The Jordan Times had hardly realised that its sister Arabic paper, Al-Rai, and a fellow journalist and colleague could be the public victim when it revived its tradition after a break of two years and played an April fool's prank on its readers. The "revolution that was in the making for Jordan's postal services," as reflected in the Jordan Times front-page story on April 1 under the slug "Mail at Your Doorstep — personal Delivery in Offing," was promptly picked up as the theme for a column by Al Rai's Bader Abdul Haq, who has just started writing his daily column, after spending years as the newspaper's Arab and international news editor. In his column, which appeared on April 2, Abdul Haq voiced pleasure at the introduction of the door-to-door postal delivery system and took pains to describe how it was so much needed in Jordan. Some at Al Rai realised, evidently a bit late, that the original Jordan Times story was a prank, but that did not stop Bader's column from appearing the next day. It sure must have been painful for Bader to learn that he had been done in, but he did indeed take it very well. Not only did he have a great laugh with the Jordan Times guys about the affair, he also wrote a column the next day telling exactly and honestly the story of what had happened, blaming it on the post office that the Jordan Times' story had to be April fool's joke rather than the whole truth.

* * *

IN the age of discoveries and rediscoveries, Jordan Television appears to be specialising in the latter. Only last week one of JTV reporters reported an "unnatural happening" related to a statue of the wife of prophet Lot. The reporter said construction work, including the use of explosives, on a highway near the antiquity, which, of course, was referred to as a JTV discovery, had no effect whatsoever on Mrs. Lot. Strange enough. But more strange is the number of times the statue was "discovered" after the Ministry of Tourism unveiled it in 1978. The newspapers picked it up shortly after the ministry, then by environmentalist Arsalan Ramadan who led Jordan Television to the scene. Now, archaeologists are at a loss to record in their books who discovered Mrs. Lot, who now stands defiantly on a cliff overlooking the highway under construction.

* * *

When the national carrier, Royal Jordanian, announced that it was taking over British Airways (BA) flights on the Amman-London-Amman route, it drew criticism from a local columnist, Fakhri Kwar of Al Rai, who is also a deputy for Amman. The criticism was that the elimination of the B.A. office in Amman would mean loss of jobs for at least 16 people. Royal Jordanian replied that there was no problem whatsoever and that the B.A. employees would be absorbed into RJ staff. It said offers had been made to the B.A. personnel. But, Jordan Times inquiries reveal that none of them has received such an offer. In fact, some of them who applied to RJ are still awaiting a reply.

* * *

While the Jordanian government has announced its decision to recall all its non-diplomatic personnel from Jordanian embassies around the world in a bid to cut spending by an estimated JD 576,000 a year, one of our national carrier's managers abroad reportedly pays \$120,000 as annual rent for his home. Many observers feel that money saved from recalling cultural staff from embassies, which will affect several families, at minimum estimate, could be better saved by recalling a few of the heads of regional offices of RJ.

Thoughts For the Week

Opposition always inflames the enthusiast, never converts him.
Johann Friedrich Schiller, German writer (1759-1805).

* * *

Revenge is always the weak pleasure of a little and narrow mind.
Juvenal, Roman lawyer-satirist (about 60 A.D.-140 A.D.).

* * *

The worst vice of a fanatic is his sincerity.
Oscar Wilde, Irish-born writer (1854-1900).

* * *

Nothing is more unjust or capricious than public opinion.
William Hazlitt, English essayist (1778-1830).

JTV Channel 2 Weekly Preview

Thursday, April 5



8:30 Comedy — The Bill Cosby Show

Clare takes part in a discussion on television, which becomes the talk of the family.

9:10 Basketball

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie of the Week

Friday, April 6

8:30 Comedy — The Robert Guillaume Show

Comedy scenes at Edward's office. He's a marriage counsellor.

9:10 Beauty and the Beast Though Lovers Be Lost (Part one of two)

The first of a new series of Beauty and the Beast: Vincent has lost his balance, he has discovered that evil lurks in his heart. So he hides staying out of sight. And Kathrine decides to do something about it.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Quincy

Into Murdering Mind

Saturday, April 7



8:30 Surgical Spirits

9:00 Encounter

10:20 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Steel

French cinema in U.S.

By Jean-Marc Dupuch

PARIS — The event well deserves to be pointed out. For the first time a French film festival has been held in the United States. It took place in November in Sarasota in Florida. The Deauville American Film Festival now finds, not its equivalent, but its correspondent, across the Atlantic.

The matter had, in fact, got off to a rather bad start. A certain local newspaper had become furious, accusing Robert M. Johnson, the senator from Florida and founder of the festival, of squandering public funds. This was the irritated echo of the protectionist reflex of the cinematographic corporations, needlessly alarmed at the risks of being penetrated by foreign cinema and, at the same time, scandalised by the European audiovisual quotas. But the figures are revealing: American cinema represents 48 per cent of the French market, while French cinema barely occupies 0.75 per cent of the American market.

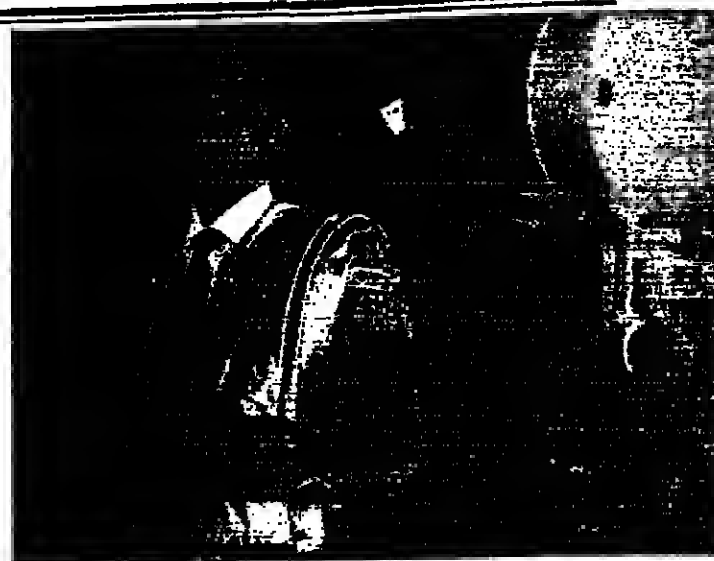
The majors (big companies) prefer to buy up the rights to hit-films and make new ones, rather than distribute the original work. This is, for instance, the case with *Trois Hommes et un Couffin* by Coline Serreau. Moreover, entrenched in their almost total monopoly, they did not even go to Sarasota. They were represented by Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America. While paying homage of the "French great masters", he justified the blatant disparity in the market by maintaining that the American public could not bear

dubbed films or subtitles.

But the festival did prove a success with the public. The numerous spectators were able to discover some fifteen subtitled "author's films" which had come out during the year and had been selected by Molly Haskell, the New-York critic and a French cinema specialist.

The French films which manage to cross the Atlantic are generally favourably received. In addition to Jean-Jacques Annaud's *L'Ours* which was exceptionally successful, and the unprecedented score of *Cousins-Cousines* and *Le Cerveau* of the *Cage aux Folles*, the adaptation of Pagnol's novels Jean de Florette and Manon des Sources by Claude Berri, Claire Denis's view of Africa in *Chocolat* and Louis Malle's painful memories in *Au Revoir les Enfants* touch the spectators, partly thanks, it is true, to a system of promotion suited to each film, a speciality of the Orion Classics Distribution Company.

Gérard Depardieu's performance in Jean de Florette was acclaimed by the press, which also gave an enthusiastic welcome to Jeanne Moreau who had been invited to Sarasota. There is thus no rejection by the public or by the critics, but a blockade by the "majors". Claude Chabrol's *Une Affaire de Femmes* perfectly illustrates the problem. In this film, Isabelle Huppert plays a simple young woman, sentenced to death by Marshal Pétain's France, for having carried out abortions. Faced with the refusal of American distributors, Marin Karmitz, who had brought out the film in France,



Young French producer Francois Dupeyron challenges American filmmakers at the French Film Festival in Sarasota, Florida.

set up his own distribution subsidiary in the United States in order to successfully distribute a work about which the public was sensitive owing to the national debate on abortion.

It is thus not unreasonable to call, as Dominique Wallon, the director of the French National Cinematography Centre, has done, for "a legitimate place in relation to the public". It is in this vein that Daniel Toscani du Planier, the president of Unifrance Film, an organisation in charge of promoting French films abroad, accepted the proposal of Sen. Johnson and led a delegation of cinema professionals to Sarasota.

It had been agreed that no prize would be awarded, but Eric Rochant's *Un Monde Sans Pitié* had been a clear success. In it Mireille Perrier and Hippolyte Girardot present the uncertain, but Parisian, love of an idle young man and a beautiful intellectual.

Bertrand Tavernier's *La Vie et Rien d'Autre* received an ovation. Philippe Noiret plays an officer in charge of registering dead or missing soldiers in Verdun in 1920. He falls in love with a young war widow, Sabine Azema.

These two films, together with Pascal Thomas's *Les Maris, les Femmes et les Amants* and Jerome Boivin's *Baxter*, were bought. And Patrice Leconte's strange *Monsieur Hire* with Sandrine Bonnaire and Michel Blanc, based on a novel by Georges Simenon, and Coline Serreau's *Romuald et Juliette*, a light utopian social comedy with Daniel Auteuil, had already found buyers before the festival.

One should, however, not be surprised that, despite the presence of Audrey Hepburn, Arthur Penn and Mankiewicz and President Bush's telegram of support, the big American television channels ignored the event — *L'Actualité en France*.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, April 5

1794 — French revolutionaries G.J. Danton and Camille Desmoulins are executed.

1946 — Soviet Union agrees to withdraw troops from Iran on promise of reforms in Azerbaijan.

1958 — Fidel Castro begins "total war" against Batista government in Cuba.

1969 — Four-man British expedition reaches North Pole after 14-month, 2,100-kilometre trek by dog sled.

1971 — Pakistan airlifts foreigners from East Pakistan as fighting rages during a revolt.

1986 — Bomb, blamed on terrorists, kills two and injured 155 as it rips through crowded Berlin discotheque popular with U.S. soldiers.

1988 — Arabic-speaking hijackers commandeer Kuwait Airways plane with 112 people aboard and force it to land in Iran.

1989 — Vietnam announces it will withdraw all its troops from Cambodia by Sept. 30 to encourage political settlement of the 10-year-old conflict.

Friday, April 6

1793 — Committee of Public Safety is established in France with dictatorial powers.

ers dominated by G.J. Danton.

1901 — Russia drops draft convention with China after protests by Britain and Japan.

1909 — U.S. explorer Robert E. Peary reaches North Pole.

1945 — U.S. naval forces score major victory over Japanese at Kyushu in World War II.

1948 — Central legislature of British East Africa holds first session in Nairobi.

1988 — Israeli settlers and Arab villagers clash in a West Bank village, killing two Palestinians and an Israeli girl.

Saturday, April 7

1934 — Mahatma Gandhi suspends civil disobedience campaign in India.

1936 — Cape parliament passes native representation bill permitting natives to elect three Europeans to represent them in union parliament in South Africa.

1941 — British forces under Archibald Wavell evacuate Benghazi in Libya during World War II.

1945 — U.S. aircraft carrier planes sink Japan's largest battleship, the Yamato, in World War II.

1953 — Dag Hammarskjöld, Swedish diplomat, is

elected secretary-general of United Nations.

1988 — Iran and Iraq bomb each other's capitals and other towns, killing and wounding scores of people.

1989 — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev concludes three-nation tour with lunch with Queen of England.

Sunday, April 8

1902 — Russia and China reach agreement for evacuation of Manchuria.

1906 — Algeciras Act is signed, giving France and Spain chief control in Morocco.

1919 — Russian Communist army enters the Crimea.

1939 — Albania's King Zog flees as Italian troops invade his country.

1958 — U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposes mutual inspection as means of enforcing atomic test ban.

1961 — Referendum in France approves a peace settlement with nationalist rebels in Algeria.

Monday, April 9

1783 — Tipoo of Mysore forces the British to surrender Bednore.

1865 — Confederate (southern) Gen. Robert E. Lee capitulates to Union

(northern) Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to end U.S. Civil War.

1928 — Islam is no longer recognised as state religion in Turkey.

1940 — German forces invade Norway and Denmark in World War II.

1942 — American-Filipino forces on Bataan surrender to Japanese.

1949 — United Nations International Court of Justice delivers its first decision, holding Albania responsible for incidents in Corfu channel and awarding Britain damages.

1974 — India, Pakistan and Bangladesh sign agreement to repatriate 195 Pakistani prisoners of war.

1975 — House of Commons in London votes in favour of Britain's continued membership in European Common Market.

1978 — Loyal troops in Somalia crush attempted coup by army officers.

1986 — West Berlin expels two Libyan diplomats after a blast in a Berlin discotheque.

1988 — China's National Peoples Congress names Li Peng as premier.

1989 — Sixteen people are reported killed as Soviet troops rush crowd of protesters in a central square of Georgian capital of Tbilisi.

By The Associated Press

THE WEEKEND CROSSWORD

Edited by Herb Ettenson

DINING IN

By Norma Steinberg

ACROSS
1 Floating adjective
4 Be an origin of
8 Santa — CA
14 White with shock
19 Jackie's former spouse
20 Cupid
21 Hippodromes
22 Like a dachshund
23 Textbook section
26 Drew a bead on
27 Envoys
28 Front part
29 Marriageable
31 Change
32 Dressed
33 Sea — WI
36 Mo.
39 Scandalous
41 Come to pass

DOWN
1 Honolulu mat
2 Catherine of —
3 Rague
4 "Wild" have you —?
5 "y" plate
6 Tipping one's hat
7 Convey
8 Lavine feature
9 Table scrap
10 Wedding announcement
11 Lodging place
12 Tally's delight
13 Guiltless
14 Jal —
15 Kansas state
16 Ancient Gr. colonnade

Diagramless

17x17, By Dee Johnson

ACROSS
1 Effervescent
5 — do manly
8 So-so
9 Binge up
10 Custom
11 Chest bone
12 "— libelous"
14 Piano
17 Season
20 Ancient Gr. colonnade

DOWN
1 Garment of Malaysia
2 Hoping
3 Baltic Sea native
4 — is in
5 Berlin suddenly
8 Woman advisor
9 Lacquer
10 — and dine
12 Lament
13 Goals

17x17, By Dee Johnson

21 Slings
25 — do manly
27 Sliding rod of a blind
28 Guns the motor
29 Theatrical
30 Shoshonean
32 Coyote
33 Handspring

14 Foreman's helper
15 Polar game money
16 Fabled
17 Frosty morning need?
18 Get ready
19 Retaliation
22 It is cream

42 Good forecast at Aspen
43 Ladder sleep
44 Add zest to
46 Alteration
47 Iron and tin
48 Snake's wares
51 Screws
52 "for Adams"
54 Truck game
55 Countable
56 Riter of old movies
57 Carnivorous bird
58 Grandparental
59 Whoops!
62 Notable time
63 January 1 stia
66 Ginger —
67 Ave.
68 Come to pass

24 Verbalist
25 Mined earth
30 Performer
31 Verbs
32 Studies
33 TV dinner choice
34 Goes without
35 Couples
36 Couples
37 Religious group
44 Step
45 Lively dance
46 Moonshiner's equipment
47 Husband and wife
48 Movie critic on TV
49 Amant's location
50 Paced

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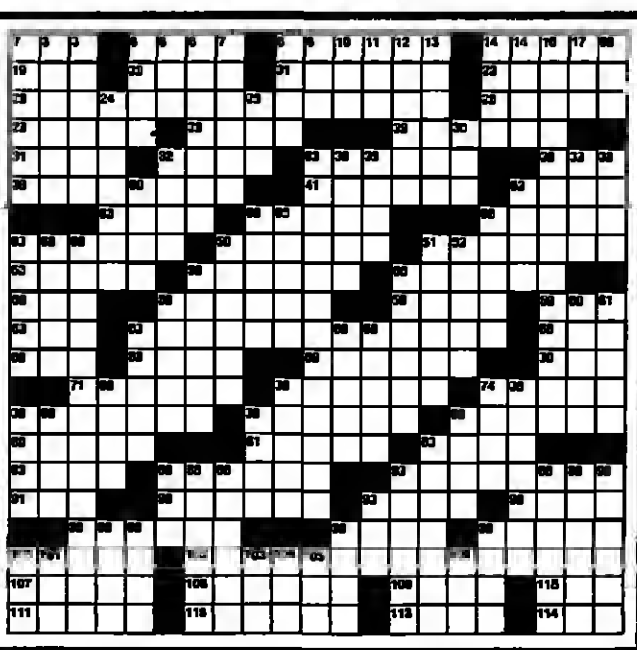
59 Mannerly
60 Cagers' gp.
61 Copy tapes
62 Legally
63 Former Supreme Court Justice
64 Soap or Moon
65 They mark
66 "for Adams"
68 Truck game
69 Prey or Agassi
70 Strong
71 Sane
72 Sane
73 Sane
74 Sane
75 Sane
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51 Turns
52 Turnstruck
53 Lines
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Last Week's Cryptograms

1. To me, the mastic is one of the cruelest of all the instruments of torture mankind ever devised.
2. When stand-up comedians dreamed of thunderous applause for his act, the kid roared to find it was really only thunder.
3. From note to last note final call makes poker pot complete.
4. Old female bird made little tweets for sweet tidbits.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. YQSI XSAT ZQINRMWFF BLIFF ASBFZY LI
CQE NCFZWI ZXSXA ASRMMT ESAS

—By Gordon Miller

2. USU EAYLCRD TY GSC HREESREA BEITCRO
BARN OGRO UARE ITLME ROOTEMAI OTCO

—By Lois E. Jones

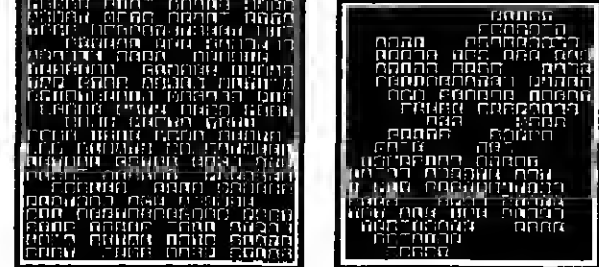
3. HJMLA CMESJE BMTJ DWZ BEMZCMIAJE
LWDLV ID YQEZ SJLAMEQL CDE CEJJ

—By Earl Irwin

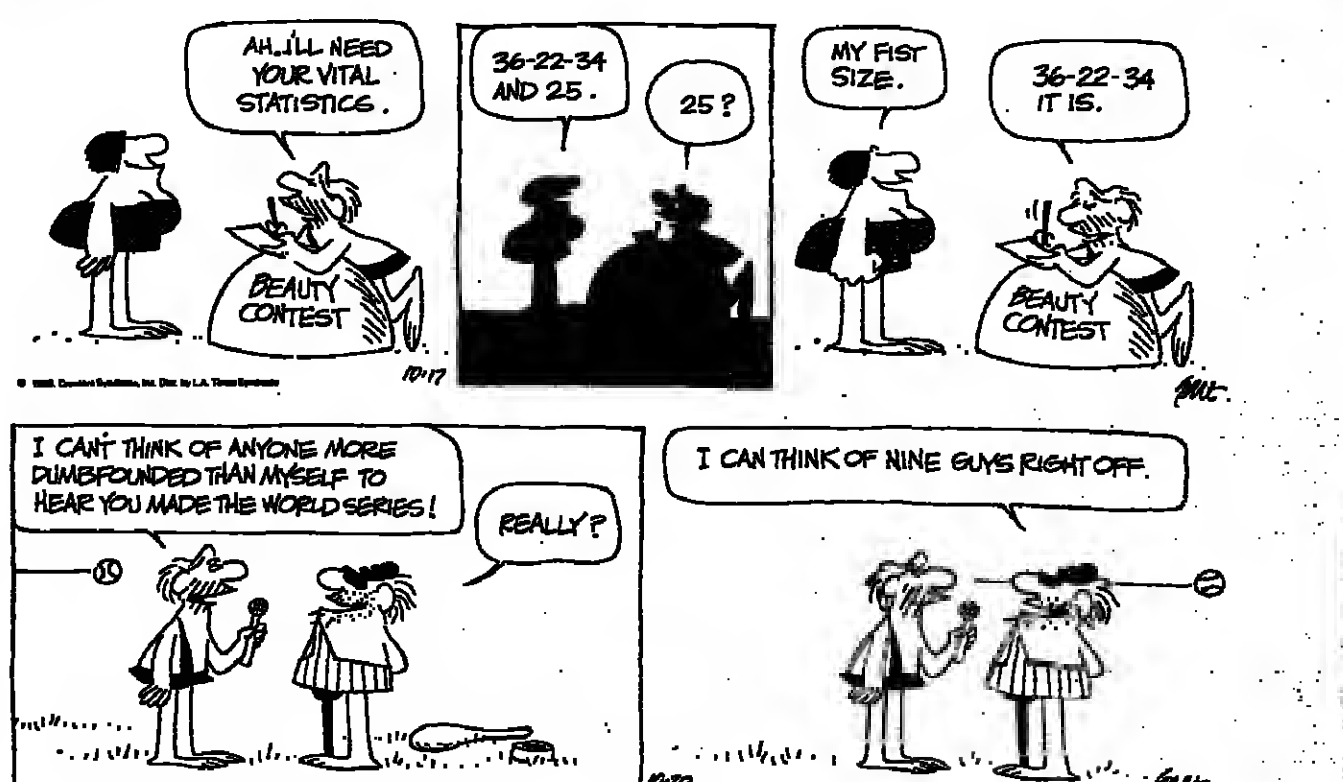
4. CLOGSO FLIK FINGERS UEPS CONUNE
GNEUSE E INPKE ONUNE KNUNE

—By Ed Haddleton

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



B.C.



Good seeds have been planted for future of music in Jordan

Text and Photos by

Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

THE NEW weekly supplement, the WEEKENDER, will provide a new channel to talk about music. Although the newspaper has always brought previews, reviews and other "views" on the said subject, the WEEKENDER will allow a wider look at how this art is progressing in Jordan. From classical to jazz, pop to rock, variety instrumentals to reggae, music is well and alive in Jordan. Slowly but surely, it is being upgraded from mere entertainment to high art. Looking back at the past 4 or 5 years, one can see a clear acceleration of the events.

Classical music in Jordan

After literally years of efforts, negotiations and struggle in order to see his plans to come true, maestro Youssef Khasho has finally succeeded in establishing the Jordan Academy of Music.

Khasho explained that one of the main difficulties he had to overcome was to keep the artistic character of the academy prevailing over the business aspect that some wanted to impose on the institution.

The academy has already started its activities. Its programme covers the education of both performers and music teachers.

Khasho is one of the very few, if not the only, Arab composer to have written full-size symphonies, in the traditional and Western form of the genre — 12 symphonies, to be accurate. Some of them, like the famous and superb Jerusalem Symphony show an obvious and strong oriental inspiration. With Khasho's talent, the blend between European and Oriental is pure art.

The maestro also explained that the academy is the only music institution officially recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education.

Among the projects of the academy are the establishment within two years of a children's orchestra, then a youth orchestra and in the long run, a National Symphony Orchestra.

Paralleling, the National Music Conservatory (one of the projects of the Noor Al Hussain Foundation) continues its activities with an

increasing number of students. It has also organised and sponsored numerous concerts, recitals and performances.

The number of young children taking music lessons, whether at the conservatory, the academy, through independent private schools or even at home with private teachers, is a clear indication of the trend.

Although some of the local talents are quite promising, it is too early to predict the future. Exceptions, however,

exist like Lima Nabil or Patrick Lama who already are renowned pianists, and have given very successful performances in Amman.

The pop scene

As far as modern or pop music is concerned the situation analysis becomes much more complicated. For many years it has been considered as low grade music by the purists who accepted only classical music as an "honourable" form of this art, but the level of sophistication and improvements introduced in pop are changing people's opinion on the subject.

In Europe and the United States many pop musicians come from the classical world with an impressive background of technique, knowledge and virtuosity. Elton John, Keith Emerson and others studied Bach well before they would rock the keyboard of a piano.

It's not yet the case in Jordan.

There are about 10 regular bands in Jordan, two of them only have reached a local stardom — Mirage and Hot Ice. Solo performers like Qasem Sabounji, Basha'r Ararat or Qusai Zureikat deserve credit for doing a fine job. The common link between all these young musicians is the fact that they write their own material and do not simply "copy

their role models.

Radio Jordan has recognised the phenomenon and DJ Sami Kamel regularly broadcasts a "Jordanian Hour" featuring the local talents. Wael Abu Nuwwar of Mirage, talking about the group's forthcoming project, said that the group is planning a concert to be held at the open-air theatre of the King Abdullah Gardens Complex, in Shmeisani.

Mirage concerts have always attracted huge audiences and their last performance at the Al Hussein Youth City's Palace of Culture brought back memories of the Beatlemania hysteria. The band has also given successful performances in Damascus last month.

Musa Faza' of Hot Ice explained to the Jordan Times he is preparing Arabic songs. His band represented Jordan last year in Germany and in the Asian Song Festival in Malaysia. Musa, like other young Jordanian composers, complains about the absence of copyright law enforcement in the country which prevents them from publishing their compositions and obtain material compensation and reward.

It is worth mentioning the availability of the latest high-tech recording facilities in the country. The studios of Wael Abu Nuwwar and Samir Baghdadli are equipped with



Wael Abu Nuwwar of the Jordanian pop group Mirage

digital machines, computer sequencers and trendy synthesizers. Although technology alone won't make good music, it still provides the local musicians with the right tools to work on.

Jazz

Apart from concerts by foreign artists, jazz music is the poorest member of the music family in Jordan. While jazz musicians do exist and live in the country, there is currently no jazz band or group performing here. The Amman Jazz Band, with their last performance given back in 1987 has split, and three of its members are now living in Europe.

Still in Amman, guitarist Basem Said and pianist

Khaled Dajani enjoy listening to jazz or playing occasionally with friends.

Surprisingly enough, jazz, which is a very open and flexible form of music, and therefore should provide an ideal frame of work to Jordanian musicians to explore and blend oriental structures, melodies and harmonies, is left aside. The reason could be that jazz requires more creativity and virtuosity than pop. There are also no "charts" or "top-twenty" in jazz, to stimulate and motivate young musicians.

Whatever the style or the label, good seeds seem to have been planted for the future of music in Jordan. One should keep taking care of them, be patient, water them a lot then wait and see.

After huge success with Salaam Bombay

Young Indian film-maker turns to inter-racial relationships

By Philippa Neave

NEW YORK — There is a deep glow in her dark eyes. A laugh, a smile, a toss of the head and she's a lively teenager. A reflective frown and she's an intense, thoughtful woman. Vibrant yet serene, Indian film-maker Mira Nair exudes a harmonious blend of toughness and sensitivity, will-power and spontaneity.

"The first thing that's important in my work is that it has to come from within me and satisfy something inside me," she explained in an interview at her New York production office. The fame that came in the wake of her hugely successful first feature film Salaam Bombay! which was crowned by the Golden Camera Award in 1988 has in no way altered her open manner.

At 32, Nair has won worldwide acclaim for her vivid portrayal of Bombay street urchins, but more important to her, she says is how the film was received in native India. The uncompromising realism of Salaam Bombay! is a radical departure from tra-

ditional Indian fare which serves up romantic epics to the tune of some 800 movies a year. Salaam Bombay! played in theatres all over India and in major cities scored a "Silver Jubilee" — a 25-week run. "I did not accept that one had to underestimate the audience in India. I respect a lot of Indian commercial cinema. But I find a lot of contemporary cinema is derivative and plagiarised, and not original — copies from Western films and escapist stuff," she said.

Nair who came to the U.S. on a Harvard University scholarship to study documentary-making in 1979 now divides her time fairly evenly between New York and India, and so far, all her work, four documentaries and Salaam Bombay! was shot in India. "In a very primary way, I feel my inspiration has been India," she says, although she admits that living between two cultures has not always been easy. "Initially, it was very hard and confusing, and I used that confusion in my work," she adds, though now she feels comfortable in this dual pattern.

"Sometimes I yearn to see all the seasons in one place, but at this point in my life, I go where my heart takes me. It's a kind of exhilaration. These are the pushes and pulls that I live with."

"I feel very grounded and close to my culture. It gives me a lot of strength to leap out and explore," says Nair, who grew up in Bhubaneswar, a historic town south of Calcutta in eastern India. Although she has become somewhat "Westernised," she says it has not really changed her relationship with people at home.

"Indians are traditionally very prickly about that, but it works both ways. A number of creative people have first gained acceptance abroad and then been embraced at home. On the other hand, if you've been abroad and returned to India to work, you are viewed in a much more caustic and critical way. In the end, what I aspire to is to be judged by my work."

"Just a worker in a different medium"

"I don't believe in person-

ality cults," she adds, "and I don't believe I'm doing anything hugely glamorous. I am just a worker, like a person in a factory, but it's just a different medium. I could simply fall and fade away. It's a very lonely profession sometimes. You just have to believe in what you do and like an insane person go after it."

It's also a profession in which few women in India have yet succeeded, but society is changing fast. In an earlier documentary entitled Children of Desired Sex Nair highlighted the traditional preference still given to male children. "It is a paradoxical situation where we have many women who are visibly successful, in positions of executive leadership. We have increasingly large middle class and more and more women in the workforce. In rural areas, women have always worked much harder than men, at home and in agriculture. The paradox comes when traditions still favour male children and women at home are supposed to submit totally to the family... A woman's place in India is filled with contradictions," she notes.

Although Indian urban society is fast moving into the world of consumerism, says Nair, "fundamental change can only occur when rural India changes." She expressed optimism and confidence in India's newly elected government headed by Prime Minister V.P. Singh who she believes is focusing on the problems of India's peasants — still a majority of the country's 814 million people.

Yet Nair expressed concern about increasing ethnic tensions and communal strife, especially in the regions of Kashmir and Punjab where religious conflicts have brought a state of civil war. "This is tearing our country apart. It is the domino theory, one thing affects another... People have lost faith in the leadership," she says, referring to the government led by former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. "When you feel there is no centre, you attempt to create your own."

Although it's a specialty of India to mix politics and the



Mira Nair

movie world — several film stars have risen to high political office largely because of their huge popularity on the screen — Nair isn't tempted to join in. "They have a lot of money and publicity, but I think it is all about dreams and image," she comments. "It's not me. I want to affect people the way I know how to, through my work. Politics is a dirty business."

Yet social and political issues often provide the seed for her creations. "A lot of my inspiration comes from survivors — people who survive against all odds, people who survive without self-pity," she explains. "But I don't find films that preach interesting because there is no tension, no mystery; they don't do justice to the complexities inherent in the situation of people living on the margins of society."

In a new film project, Nair has decided to address another complex social issue, that of inter-racial relationships and what she calls the "black, brown, white hierarchy." Shooting is due to start in September, and the plot will focus on an Indian family which is expelled from Idi Amin's Uganda after living there for 20 years. The family ends up in Mississippi, in the southern United States, home now to a large Indian community, where some wealthier relatives settled.

Indians have been attracted to the southern U.S. because of the warm climate, and says Nair, many have done well there. Their success contrasts with the situation of the large black community whose people seemingly are resigned to their fate and have little drive to fight for success. "The surface is extremely deceptive. There are (still) deep inequalities in this society. Mississippi is an extreme case of segregated America. It is a situation of no-exit; psychologically, the young

black people have not been allowed to dream. When you deprive an individual of the ability to aspire to anything, they ask themselves 'what is the point?'"

"The black community has been there for 400 years, but it faces a struggle that is very real because it comes from inside. When there has been a cultural genocide on such a deep level, it is hard to start again."

In the south, Indians occupy an unusual position, says Nair. "The whites like the fact that the Indians are there, running the businesses, because they're not black; the blacks like the Indians because they are brown brothers... and the Indians like the fact that the blacks exist because they can be the underdogs."

In the film, the young daughter of the newly-arrived Indian family becomes involved with a young black who runs a carpet cleaning business. When their relationship is discovered the latent racial tensions explode. "The film is also about displacement and the notion of home," Nair says. "These are things that are very personal to me and very inspiring. Africa is very present in the film as the notion of home. Mythically, it is the black people's home, and it is also the home of the Indian girl, because she has never known India."

Unlike for Salaam Bombay! in which Nair relied mostly on non-professional actors — children off the streets — she will use professionals from India, Africa and black-Americans. She promises to draw also on the local population.

The film is to be called Mississippi Masala — masala being the Indian word for a blend of hot spices used to flavour food. Concludes Nair: "It's about the fact that we're all masalas in this new world. We're all from somewhere else and going somewhere else" — World News Link.

Kathleen Turner returns to Broadway

By Patricia Zengerle
Reuters

PITTSBURGH — Film star Kathleen Turner is proud of the work she's done in the theatre, but, unlike many actresses, she won't express a preference for stage or screen.

"I don't prefer either. I want both," she said in a recent interview. "I love the exactness of film, that you can be so incredibly precise. On stage, you must be less specific."

On the other hand, Turner said she thrived on theatre's opportunity to work before an audience. "The experience is so supportive, and so exciting."

Turner was in Pittsburgh on a pre-Broadway tour with 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,' Tennessee Williams tale of love, sickness, sexuality and frustration, which opened in New York last month for a limited run.

Turner is playing Maggie, the sexy young wife fighting to regain the romantic interest of her husband.

The character is marked by a frustrated, bitchy side, but Turner says she also tries to emphasise Maggie's humour.

"It's quite delightful to play her. I like the level of aliveness I have with her," the 35-year-old actress said.

Already known as a sizzling leading lady in film since starring in the 1981 hit Body Heat, Turner said she had wanted to play Maggie since she was a girl.

But she stressed that there's a lot more to Kathleen Turner than the steamy parts she's played.

"I don't identify with any role," she said. "It's acting, really, truly it is."

"I'm not like that at home," said Turner, a happily married mother whose desire to stay close to her family is reportedly the reason the show's pre-Broadway tour was limited to four east coast cities.

As well as playing the seductress in Body Heat, Turner's film work has included a string of hits — Prizzi's Honour, 'Peggy Sue Got Married,' The Accidental Tourist, and a trio of films



Kathleen Turner

with Michael Douglas, 'Romancing the Stone,' 'Jewel of the Nile' and most recently 'The War of the Roses.'

Before her screen break in 'Body Heat,' Turner worked both in regional theatre and on Broadway.

The actress also put her unmistakable, husky vocals to good use in the 1988 hit film 'Who Framed Roger Rabbit,' providing the voice of Jessica Rabbit, the film's sexy cartoon star.

The tall blonde actress said of her most famous roles: "It's fun to play these women, with power and intelligence."

She laughed when she was asked to name her favourite leading man.

'Daniel Hugh Kelly,' she said, referring to the actor who plays Maggie's alienated, alcoholic husband Brick in 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.'

Asked how he felt acting as foil to an actress like Turner, Kelly joked in turn, "I've quit drinking."

Besides Turner and Kelly, the production includes veteran movie and theatre actor Charles Durning as Big Dabby, Brick's father and the family's dying patriarch, and Polly Holliday, best known as a television actress, as Big Mama, big daddy's wife.

Turner said she was committed to 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' on Broadway until mid-July, but wouldn't discuss her future plans.

"I can't tell you," she said, leaning back and pulling her hair up into the air.



Mira Nair directs two street urchins in Salaam Bombay

A great aftermath for a puppet performance

By Nelly Lama

AMMAN — Wafa Qusous, a Jordanian puppeteer working under the aegis of Nour Al Hussein Foundation, presented and finally rounded up her own "public" performances of the puppet play "My Grandma's Chest: Storeis."

The play rolls around a little girl, Zeina, who opens her grandmother's chest only to find old embroidered material that emit a particular smell. She is about to throw them away when her grandmother, clothed in Salt costume, gently scolds her and tells her the story of Zeina, a girl who beckoned the clouds and the mountain to bring back rain to the barren land of her fathers. As the rain came and blooms grew, Zeina was offered in return for her zeal and perseverance, threads with the colours of the rainbow. With them, she was supposed to embroider her tattered black dress. Zeina, touched by her grandmother's story, she caresses the embroidered piece that she now values, kisses it and replaces it into the chest.

Mixed kinds of puppets were used. Large Bunraku puppets played the major theme, while hand and shadow puppets filled in the secondary story that was built within the major one. The space ranged from a vast stage to a small box. Coreography penetrated sur-

face areas and swayed into depths, or remained true to the surface of the box-theatre serving affects and expressions.

After each performance, Qusous — puppet-maker, script-writer and puppeteer — would fill the children in on the technical background of the puppets, the shadow theatre, the different elements used to form the make-believe rain, the moving mountains, etc. Some kids could not wait to go home and try these new-found techniques.

After her brief expose,

Qusous would ask the children to express their opinions and reactions. "Let the children evaluate!" is a wise and perceptive reflection by her.

Perceptive too were the children who told or reactions that the puppeteer herself had not thought of; deep constructive philosophies, such as "This play taught us — to try to solve our problems on our own and without hesitation... to care for the land and to water the plants... to take care of our embroidery and traditions... to never touch things that do not belong to us!" These comments were

spoken out loud by the child-audience. An old grandmother commented gratefully, "I appreciate the fact that you showed a gentle grandmother who tells stories to her grandchild. Grandmothers are losing this sense of being protectors and are often portrayed negatively with something like 'I'll let grandma give you an injection!' — creating fear rather than reassurance."

Some children were relieved that Qusous treated them like "fulfilled human beings with brains." They claimed that many

actors behave childishly and constantly emit such superlative expressions that "they make us feel like a bunch of fools!"

Children were also given the chance to ask questions. They asked why the puppet's hand was rather large for the body. Qusous explained that the puppeteer is free to exaggerate features for greater expression.

They asked how she could change voices so easily and not mix up between the characters? Voices are definitely Qusous's "fort" and the extent of her training, the innumerable hours that she spends practising, vouch for her infallible vocalisation.

Since the major part of the play was done with large puppets in the Bunraku style, Qusous and her partner stood on stage skillfully manipulating the puppets. This affect, new to the Jordanian public, raised some complaints from adults, while children, always for something new, were aware of the expressions on Qusous's face, as well as the expressive movement of the puppets.

"people must learn to accept new things!" exclaims the puppeteer, "They have to realise that this type of theatre has been going on in Japan since the 17th Century. Why is it that in this part of the world such an effect is shunned? In fact, it was from here that the earliest, greatest and most unusual (shadow)

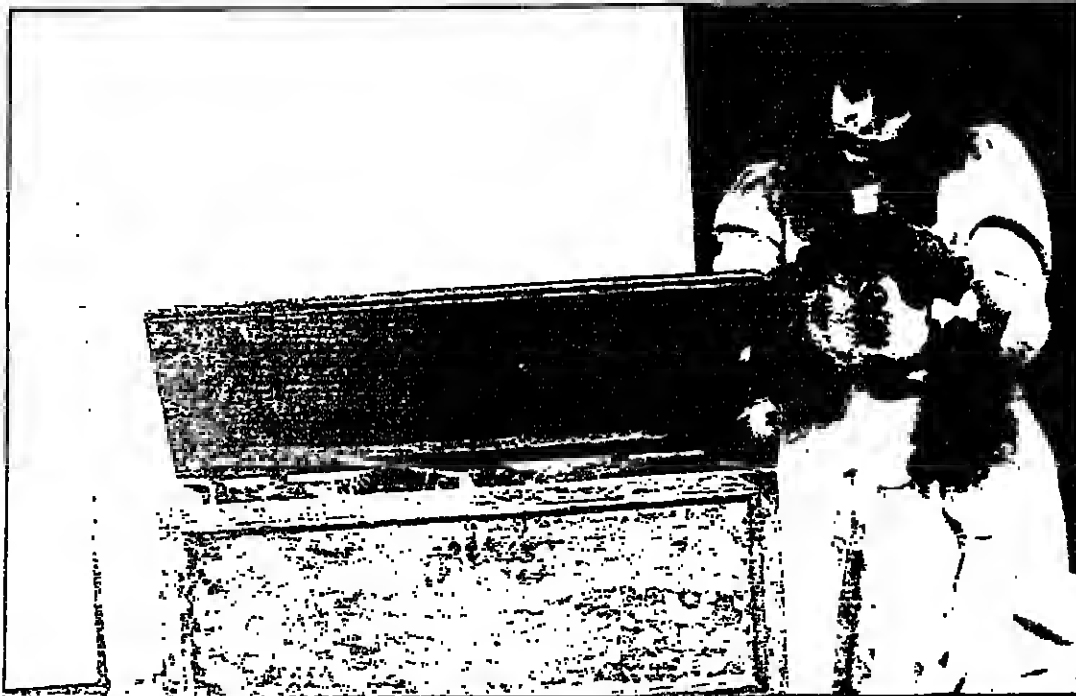
puppeteers have evolved. We ought to be more open to 'unfamiliar' things."

At the end of the play, the morale is summed up in Zein's gentle caressing of the embroidery, in her kissing it lovingly, and putting it away. This is done at a very slow pace that passes on the true feeling of the little girl, who had become softer and wiser after having heard her grandmother's story. One could detect at that silent moment, a few tearful faces, they were not sad, just touched by the fragility of the act and the wisdom behind it. This magical moment is followed by a brief slide show of similar embroidered pieces, as if to drive the message of the preservation of our culture and traditional crafts even deeper.

"If you are true and honest about your beliefs," explained Qusous, "then you have to pass these feelings on to your audience."

Some children returned with drawings of the characters and the set to show them to "the lady that makes the puppets move." Yes, her appearance on stage with her puppets actually made the whole show more palpable.

Children found the two major puppets "Teta (grandma) and Zeina" so familiar and so ethnically local in attitude and dress that they wanted to take photos with them.



Wafa Qusous with the puppet Zeina, looking into the grandmother's chest.



Zeina's grandmother in traditional Salt costume.

One little girl was extremely impressed by the theme that happened to coincide with her own existence. "My name is Zein and I am from Salt," she explained to the puppeteer.

These positive reactions have made this novel cultural event a major educational experience. A number of schools have booked future performances.

In the few public performances held at the RCC, Qusous invited children from Mabarret Um Al Hussein and handicapped children from Young Women's Muslim Association.

If, as Qusous claims, the children are the best judges, then she, assisted by a few creative people, has indeed succeeded and with flying colours.

Lace, embroideries, colours and a festival in white

The luxury woman of the '90s



St. Gall embroidery with pique applications on organza from the collection of Sergio Lepage, Paris.

ANY observer scrutinising the haute couture Paris shows for confirmation of the "new modesty" seen in the prêt-à-porter shows (which, in fact, only reflected a dearth of ideas) would have been disappointed. The haute couture cuts are subtler than ever. Colours are daringly combined and anyone skipping on lace or St. Gall embroideries would have been out of place in the 22 houses which, for a packed week, sent collections along the catwalks to face the gaze of literally thousands of reporters, private clients and powerful buyers designed to match the magnificence of the luxury-loving woman during the last decade of our millennium.

Many of the couture houses ignore the early hours and only picture these luxury creatures as from the witching hours between five and seven. And yet such leading lights of the noble art of tailoring as Yves Saint Laurent or Givenchy dress their women from morning to night.

Whereas earlier years saw a host of severely tailored

costumes in navy or in English worsteds, mornings are now totally given over to white and only white, and that includes a luncheon in the Plaza. As a special concession, very pale sky blue and ethereal silver grey are also acceptable. Two-pieces have no need for a blouse — one's own well-tanned skin suffices. And that still applies when the costume is a combination of luminous silk crepes or colourful gabardines. The virtually thigh-cropped skirt is highly favoured. Not even Chanel shows anything hovering around the knee. The modern woman floats towards the "naughty nineties" on the longest of long legs culminating in ultra-high heels decked out in skirts even shorter than mini. Trousers are almost exclusively the province of prêt-à-porter.

Topcoats are invariably of the lightest possible cashmere, lined with brightly shining satin and held together with glittering buttons (Ungaro). The gold button appears to be bowing out gracefully. Mother of pearl triumphs and jewels dazzle

the onlooker.

First and foremost, there is embroidery everywhere. There was not a single morning dress in navy or black by Ferré for Christian Dior which was not partnered with white organza, lace or embroidered applications. Forster Willi was called upon to supply the necessary and the art of Jakob Schlaepfer was much in demand. Tiny jackets in laces or embroideries from these two houses partner almost every collection from the indefatigable Cardin to the restrained and elegant Hanae Mori. Scherrer, inspired by his recent trip to India, picked rhinestone-embroidered tulle lace from Switzerland for the tops to his luncheon two-pieces.

From early morning, brocades shimmer in partnership with delicately shaded hand-woven silks or glitter under luminous satins. There are entire collections almost exclusively decked out by Abraham. Such was the inspiration of his gaze, his satin-doubles, his taffeta-chinés and his colourful cotton brocades on Yves Saint

Laurent that the great master received a 13-minute standing ovation at the end of his 62nd haute couture show. And then, of course, there were the muslims which enlivened all the collections with their fairy-tale colours or subtle flower prints.

Entire fabric families, from crisp ottoman to silk muslin, paraded the same motifs, sometimes in the form of an animal design; sometimes as a floral print. Although white and the whole panoply of abstract luminous colours played a starring role, black remained the restrained, Nobel winner for the more than daringly draped cocktail gowns from Ungaro. What is more, the Golden Thimble for Summer 1990's most creative haute couture collection went to Paco Rabanne's Swiss designs. Givenchy explored the very limits of the "permissible" with an ultra-brief wrapover dress in diamanté-strewn, ultra fine copper retina from Jakob Schlaepfer and hit the headlines with it. (Never fear, this can in any case be ordered later in a more modest length!)

And as for the prints: Flowers such as those that adorn Oriental gardens — albeit dreamt up by Swiss designers — bloom on gazar, muslin, cloqués or stiffer ottomans. Their incredible fresh-



A lavish, asymmetrically worked, flower-embroidered bridal gown from St. Gall.

ness instantly evokes the image of Botticelli's "Primavera" or of the scents of rare perfumes. Everywhere there is lace from St. Gall, transformed into flowers or corals, cross-cross patterns or in the form of arabesques, with delicately woven wisps of georgette or chiffon as combined by Karl Lagerfeld in his intensely erotic collection for Chanel.

The lushness of colourful embroideries on lace, tulle and organza vies with the luminous force of the elegant silks, satins and majestic duchesse. The organza trains wafting about the figure are sure-fire hits on account of the modam movement they give the silhouette. Nonetheless, overlong, twice-lined trains will not survive their first appearance on today's lifestyle — so much is certain!

The magnificence of the Swiss-designed fabrics met with unanimous acclamation from private clients and media alike. Seams and sleeves are embellished with lace; thereby also rediscovering the cuff as enhancement to the sleeve. Cuffs are in pleated organza, as shown by Nina Ricci, or beaded such as those emanating from Versace's workrooms. Alternatively, they can be satin, akin to those espoused by Ungaro. All direct the gaze

to elegant hands in the finest of gloves. Shoulders remain unembellished. Macho padding is out: St. Gall embroidery or lace yokes, or even tiny pleats on silk crepe jackets are in. Whatever the material, jackets make a triumphant progress.

There is no lack of fashion jewellery to enhance these fashion jewels, nor any shortage of delicate footwear. Lace, embroideries and silk tassels come into their own here, too. And for anyone, to whom this may all seem too ostentatious, there are still the ubiquitous spots in navy and white and stripes in every width, the summertime freshness of which is synonymous with spring. Valentino has a masterly touch with these.

Once again, Paris haute couture, with its many guests from the Alta Moda city of Rome, proved its powers of attraction for the fashion conscious. The high art of tailoring uses the noblest of materials and Paris knows just where to find them — in Switzerland. A typical example is Yves Saint Laurent, whose "Homage to Catherine Deneuve" took the form of a gown in yellow satinfaçoné from Abraham and whose "Homage to Marilyn Monroe" was a dream of a dress in Swiss lace. Other "Homages" are sure to follow — Centre for Swiss Textiles.

Fendi sisters fight for their skins

By Joan Follain
Reuters

MILAN — Italy's five Fendi sisters, lambasted by animal activists as the fashion world's top furriers, are out to save their skins.

Eager to defeat a worldwide lobby strongest in the United States, the Roman sisters have defiantly challenged their vocal critics with a huge and luxurious store on New York's Fifth Avenue.

Demonstrators draped in pelts splashed with red varnish chanted "Fendi sells blood" when the doors to the flagship store — which boasts golden and black marble floors and a crystal lift — were thrown open late last year.

On sale next to Fendi's lines of ready-to-wear clothes, handbags and other luxury goods, was the kind of fur which makes animal rights activists see red — an ermine coat worth \$200,000 thousand.

The Fendi sisters outlined their strategy against their critics at Milan's autumn-winter fashion shows this month

when they paraded a range of skilfully camouflaged, but still precious, pelts.

Snaking their way through the renaissance arches of a spillover palace courtyard, Fendi's models showed off mink, golden sables and summer emine — but each design was reversible, and many were worn with the fur on the inside.

Fake pelts rubbed shoulders with the real thing, and the sisters camouflaged the furminess of a squirrel jacket by weaving in tufts of wool all over it. Amateur burglars might not give them a second glance.

Not that pelts are on their way out — far from it, says Carla Fendi, who spearheaded the \$8 million assault on Fifth Avenue.

"Everybody's free to think what they want. America's beautiful because of that. But a woman will always have her vanity. You can't tell her to throw her fur away just because it's an animal's skin."

"It's like telling a man to throw away his Ferrari just because we can't get rid of industrial waste."

Instead Fendi is seeking to make its furs more like any other throw-on garment, building on a lifetime of moving away from the voluminous coats — "kilos of fur that gave you arthritis" — that Carla remembers her mother Adele designing.

The sisters had a hard time in the 1940s convincing their strict, tradition-bound mother to let them try lighter designs.

The sisters won, and have since launched a series of pioneering techniques for handling fur, including punching tiny holes to make clothes swing.

The new, more discreet, furs on display in Milan are the latest innovations signed with the cherished double F logo that has made the sisters the darlings of the rich and famous.

French film star Catherine Deneuve, congratulating the sisters backstage, hailed the show as "sumptuous materials with typically Italian imagination."

The morning after, as a security guard watched over the furs, Carla sat on a stool

at the table there she and her sisters — Paola, Franca, Alda, and Anna — design the clothes.

Black, wooden and ordinary, the table means so much to the sisters they have made a habit of carting it to and fro from Rome to Milan twice a year.

"Each sister has a stool with her name on it, and we sit round it, and we talk. We start from nothing, we talk about life, about how we feel, about what's happening in the world, and that's how we design clothes with Karl," she said.

"Karl" is the brother the sisters never had, the prolific hired gun of the fashion world, West German Karl Lagerfeld.

Lagerfeld, who as a fashion house stylist revived the fortunes of Chanel, is celebrating 25 years of designing furs and ready-to-wear clothes for the five sisters.

Exchanging greetings in German, Italian, English and French in the models' changing rooms after the show, Lagerfeld had only praise for

the five sisters:

"They give me a tremendous amount of freedom, it's just me expressing myself through them — the only thing is that for Fendi things have to be light, nothing heavy."

Lagerfeld has a given Fendi many innovative designs.

He took mole, rabbit and squirrel — furs previously thought unfashionable or unsuitable — and dyed them in vibrant colours. He has also mixed fur with leather and various fabrics.

Lagerfeld, who wears thick spectacles and wears his greying hair pulled back in a little ponytail, is more Roman than the Romans when it comes to designing for Fendi.

Asked for a new line in handbags recently, he strolled up to the sisters' table a few days later, and emptied out a bag of pasta.

Thus was pasta line born — black leather handbags with gold noodles threaded onto the shoulder-straps.

Fendi says they are a runaway success, and not just in the sisters' pasta-crazy homeland.



Calette in Swiss cotton organza from the collection of Christian Lacroix, Paris.

Medieval Nizwa loses tree, gets new market

By Eric Hall
Reuters

NIZWA, Oman — For generations, a tree in Nizwa bazaar had spread its gnarled branches to shade the traders at the Friday animal auctions.

Now it has gone, and the 20th century has really come to this medieval city which is getting a new market as part of a multi-million dollar development programme.

The tree disappeared two months ago. Some old men said the reason was a storm. Some said it died. Some said it was pulled down. Some said that all these things were true.

The tree is now the stuff of legend, and the certainties of modern times have arrived in Nizwa.

Under the decaying roof of the old bazaar, a busload of elderly Germans spend money, the vanguard of tourist trade.

Nizwa is one of the old capitals of Oman and an ancient centre of Islam, set southwest of the barren mountains which separate it from the modern capital of Muscat, and the sea.

The great 14th-century traveller Ibn Battuta visited Nizwa.

"This city is at the foot of a mountain and surrounded by gar-

dens and rivers. It has a beautiful clean bazaar and the mosques are large and scrupulously clean," he wrote.

"They are a bold and brave race, and the tribes are perpetually at war with each other," he added.

This last remark was still applicable not much more than 30 years ago. It was only in 1955 that the then Omani Sultan Said Ben Taimour marched in with British support to end the rule of the last Imam of Nizwa, and unite the country.

The old bazaar is, unfortunately, not quite as perfect as the one Ibn Battuta admired. The rest remains true.

The people of Nizwa, proud inheritors of a 1,300-year-old tradition, have mixed feelings about the new plans.

At noon on one recent hot spring day, the silver merchants, the spice shops, and food traders were closing.

In a corner of the grain market, four old men sat out of the heat under the roof of split palm fronds.

Just behind the crumbling walls of their shop, the earth movers had completed the foundations of the new market and steel reinforcing wires and concrete beeping through. Corrugated iron

had replaced part of the old bazaar's roof.

"Some people prefer the old market. Some people look forward to the new market," said one old man, with a long white beard and gap-toothed smile.

"Nobody yet knows for sure whether the old bazaar will be restored like they restored Nizwa fort. But we would like to preserve some of our heritage," said a younger colleague.

"In the past, whenever a bit of the market fell down, we rebuilt it with the same materials," he said.

The patchwork quality of the mud and stone walls, the maze of old archways, and narrow passages, attest to that fact.

The Nizwa development programme will include a new series of markets, slaughterhouses, and road bypasses, costing 10 million rials (\$27 million).

The result will undoubtedly be more hygienic, and allow local traders better access, and facilities.

But some things still look more in place in medieval Nizwa. On the archway entrance to the grain market hangs a sign.

"By order of the government, hunting the wild oryx deer and other animals and birds here listed is now forbidden."



A passion for reading

By Claire Thierry

NEVER in the living memory of books had such a thing been seen before: a whole weekend devoted to the celebration of reading! This fête, called "A Passion for Reading", took place on Oct. 21 and 22, all over France. It was the first of its kind in the world.

It was organised in less than three months on the initiative of the French Minister of Culture Jack Lang. The aim of this large-scale operation was to encourage the French to read more (according to a recent survey, one person in four never reads).

Publishers, writers and poets, printers, librarians, radio and television stations, printed-paper buffs and lovers of novels, book-sellers, film-makers and actors all made their contribution together with the public authorities.

The result was a great event with the book as the only hero. A book is indeed an instrument of knowledge, but also an object of pleasure and a tool for freedom. The success of the fête matched the energy invested. The enthusiastic public flocked to the events (there were several hundreds of them) announced by the media and on the French Minitel videotex network.

The French capital had the greatest variety of events. The keen-reading Parisians were overwhelmed at the choice of possibilities during those feverish, summer-warm days. Thus that temple of knowledge, the Bibliothèque

Nationale, opened its doors to everyone for the first time. In two days, over 35,000 visitors had admired its impressive reading-room and the antique books on display in its showcases. They were also able to buy rare copies or old books at the Book Fair held in the courtyard. Close-by in the Palais-Royal gardens, actors from the Comédie Française declaimed a scene from a tragedy, a few pages from a novel, a newspaper article ... or a cookery recipe, before delighted tourists and strollers.

Museums (Orsay, the Louvre, the Grand-Palais) held sales of art books. The studio of the new Bastille-Opera proved too small to house all the Alexandre-lovers who had come to take part in the "Night of Poetry." In the dining-room of the Orsay Museum, a "Book-Dinner" brought together writers, journalists, publishers and booksellers who exchanged their favourite books during the feast.

The libraries, which had remained open on Sunday, had never gained so many members in so short a time. Two mini-libraries were even inaugurated in the metro. And bookshops had rarely sold so many books in two days. For lovers of fine craftsmanship, some old-style, traditional typography workshops opened their doors: the Imprimerie Nationale (French National Printing Works), the Librairie Portogaise and the Ateliers Maeght. Even the cultural centres of

various foreign countries imagined some activities based on books. For instance, the prestigious Arab World Institute put on a show worthy of the "Tales of the Arabian Nights," with readings of Arabic tales and poems to background music, in a tent.

In the provinces, books were also celebrated in villages as well as in the big regional capitals. In addition to exhibitions, there were book-signing gatherings and traditional open-day events in bookshops and libraries. There were also some original events with a "baby-reader" fair in Quetigny in the Côte d'Or department, a poetry market in Nantes, visits by writers to prisons, and lectures by authors in people's homes in the Franche-Comté. Balloons bearing texts were released in Biarritz.

An event was held in Lille station in the north of France, bringing together some 15,000 people. For the length of a weekend, the city of Strasbourg in Alsace became a "crossroads of European literature" and thrill-seekers met in Grenoble for a "Festival of Spine-Chilling Novels and Films".

It is not possible to give a complete inventory of all the initiatives taken on this occasion, but they sprang up like mushrooms after a shower. But one thing is sure. It is going to happen again. On a vaster scale. Just like the Music Fête which is now held all over the world — (L'Actualité en France).

New freedom instills fear among E. German journalists

NEWLY won freedom for journalists in East Germany has brought many problems. After 40 years of being muzzled, many find it difficult to cope. A woman journalist on a local paper said she did not know how to cope with letters to the editor.

Another woman on another local paper said it was strange not having someone looking over the shoulder all the time. Mary, released from tight supervision, have begun to doubt their own ability. They become afraid of their own courage. The idea lingering in their minds is that, unless every sentence is weighed up, it will upset someone somewhere.

East German journalists may be in Saarbrücken (in West Germany) for the Land elections or for the Max Ophüls Film Festival or in their own offices; they all have the freedom they have longed for. But no one has taught them how to use it.

Page layouts are a problem now that advertisements are being included for the first time. There used to be three or four standard full-page layouts, which was enough for the standardised presentation. Suddenly, that is a thing of the past.

The routine of beginning at eight in the morning and working until five in the evening can hardly be maintained when there are no longer any subsidies, newspapers are more expensive and there is pressure to be up-to-date

with the news.

Often quite unnoticed much has happened at the editorial level. Staff members on papers have elected new editors-in-chief and have experimented with daring styles of news presentation. For the first time it is possible to run surveys of current themes such as price increases or strikes. For the first time, pictures can be published on taboo themes such as run-down houses and cosmetic facades.

For many journalists in East Berlin, Magdeburg or Cottbus this is still difficult. They cannot get the habit of censoring so easily out of their heads. Many are afraid of their own courage, and the idea lingers at the back of their minds: "That will cause annoyance," or "If that turns out well..."

The brakes are put on the new press freedom by the idea, never known before, that the job is not as secure as it might be.

Until now there were plenty of staff members to put out a newspaper. There were many journalists, but they could all find a job. It was not uncommon for four journalists to be employed to fill a single page.

Now that subsidies have been cancelled on grounds of economy consideration must be given to cutting back on staff.

There is, then, considerable interest among GDR editors and

journalists to find out how a daily works, produced within the context of the free market economy and owned by staff members. There is the need to come to grips with the GDR press which until now has not had to cope with economic problems.

Many local newspapers see their future in staff taking a cut in salary and buying into the newly-established limited companies, independent and non-partisan.

The new technology, which is a matter of course for journalists in the Federal Republic, is a closed book to colleagues in the GDR. Most GDR papers are produced with the good, old-fashioned methods using lead.

Since the change of course politically journalism in the GDR is literally in the midst of radical change. If one asks impartially how colleagues in "the real existing" socialist system put up with being gagged and censored, the answer simply is: "We had no alternative;" or, "We could never believe that anything like what has happened would be possible."

Unlike in the offices of the communist party it is quite out of the question thinking along the lines of a complete change of editorial staff.

This means that GDR journalists are in that group of workers which has experienced the most difficult consequences of the political change taking place in the German Democratic Republic. One of these consequences is dealing with aged, undemocratic structures. Another more difficult task for GDR journalists in the new political climate is following up and exposing errors and social evils. Journalists in the GDR are ill-prepared to cope with this. — (Saarbrücker Zeitung).

ACC ministers meet

(Continued from page 1)

Aziz told the press that he had called for an emergency meeting of foreign ministers of the 22-member Arab League to discuss a possible Israeli assault on Iraq.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's warning on Monday that Iraq had binary chemical weapons and would use them to retaliate for any Israeli attack on Iraqi territory was followed Tuesday by Israel's launch of a space satellite.

"Israel has maintained military and industrial superiority in the region for a long time and now wants to attack the Iraqi industrial and scientific sites to maintain the balance of power, which has changed," Aziz told reporters on the fringes of the meeting.

"Israel has always been the aggressor," he said and noted that the Jewish state had not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which Iraq has signed.

"Iraq now has the means to confront Israel, but what it needs is Arab support to face the challenge of the aggressor," he said.

Qasem told reporters that Jordan stood firmly behind Iraq and that "the minimum Jordan would do is come to Iraq's side in case it is attacked." He also said that Iraq had every right to defend itself and "develop science and technology to improve its defence capabilities."

Aziz said the "Western media attacks against Iraq only confirm that validity of Iraq's position." The support that the Arab

media have extended to Iraq, he said, "is an indication of the Arab Nation's support for Iraq."

Aziz said the United States, Britain and Israel had mounted a campaign against Iraq to discredit its international image and isolate it in preparation for Israeli raids on Iraqi targets.

"President Saddam Hussein has made it clear that if Israel wants to attack our scientific and industrial complexes or any part of Iraq, the Iraqi retaliation will be strong enough to give them a hard lesson. We have the will to do that and we have the capability," he said.

Aziz said that when Israel was sure its military edge over the Arabs was intact it would continue to block peace efforts. "Israel is not going to yield to international pressure to reach a just and open peace with the Arabs. The main target is to keep the occupation and deny Arab rights," he added.

On Israel's satellite launch, Aziz said he was surprised the West never criticised Israel's technological accomplishments.

"When an Arab country achieves a similar achievement then the whole fuss comes, the comments, suspicions and attempts to discredit the image of (that) Arab country," he said.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Abdul Meguid told reporters at the airport that the ACC meeting would reaffirm Arab solidarity with Iraq against the "malicious campaign" waged by Israel, the United States and Britain.

Peres claims majority

(Continued from page 1)

Labour, with 39 Knesset seats, has signed up the religious Agudat Israel party, which has five

seats, and can probably count on the support of 10 leftist members and six Arab and Communist parliamentarians.

Randa Habib's Corner

Treat kids as kids

IT SEEMS that once in a while it might be timely to remind hosts of children's programmes at Jordan Television that it has long been established that children belong to the human race, equipped with consciousness, passions and pulse. They even grow up and become adults.

This fact seems to occasionally slip television hosts when they interview children, talking to them as if they were mentally retarded or somekind of creatures that need to be dealt with in a completely different way. In fact, it is quite frustrating to watch how our children on television are constantly intimidated with the behaviour of the hosts who demand serious behaviour from children who cannot be and should not be anything but children.

I am talking about any particular programme. I am talking about a sad phenomenon that is deeply rooted in our psyche and fed by inadequate presentation by the country's most important medium — television.

Comparing the way our children speak on television with other children of the world, we are often saddened to see how our children, whom we know are as brilliant as any children in the world, appear so handicapped on television, thanks to those preparing these programmes.

Why are children made to feel intimidated with a presenter wearing a suit and tie or an extremely formal dress will all the accessories making them look so remote from the children? Why are the children taught to act so maturely on television? Actually it is not fair to only criticise television for that. It all starts at school and then at home. There is something inherently wrong with the way we raise our children. We must first look into our schools and teachers who are of primary importance in developing the sense of confidence and initiative among our youngsters.

Those who want to continue to treat children as though they were retarded, do your kids a favour ... don't have any.

Smoking will kill 500 million in 25 years — WHO

PERTH, Australia (R) — An estimated 500 million people will die from smoking in the next 25 years, according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) study released here.

WHO statistician Dr. Alan Lopez and Richard Peto, an epidemics expert at Britain's Oxford University, said their study indicated smoking would be the number one cause of death in the world by the turn of the century.

"Today there will be 8,000 deaths a day from smoking, but when the kids reach middle age there will be something like 28,000 deaths a day," Peto told reporters at the World Conference on Tobacco and Health.

If present patterns continued, 200 million people under the age of 20 and 300 million adults will die of smoking by 2015, Peto said.

The study, said to be the first comprehensive world mortality forecast for smoking, rates tobacco consumption a bigger potential killer than AIDS.

"At the moment it looks as if this is going to be vastly greater than the AIDS epidemic," Peto said.

Peto said there was no doubt

about the accuracy of their forecast as it was based on more reliable figures than those for AIDS.

"The (trend) is fairly well understood, it's just that people have not taken the arithmetic seriously. This is very much an epidemic in slow motion," he said.

In their forecast, which Peto and Lopez described as conservative, the number of deaths attributed to smoking include around 30 per cent of all cancers and medically established percentages of deaths from a range of heart and lung diseases.

"These numbers are large but real," Peto said. "We tried in various ways to scale them down. It may not sound it, but we bent over backwards to try not to overestimate. These figures are at the low end of estimates."

Two-thirds of the forecast deaths in the 1990s will occur in wealthy nations, where 20 per cent of all deaths are already attributable to smoking, the study said.

But developing nations will probably experience 70 per cent of all world deaths from smoking by 2025, they said.

Jordan Times

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GM wins top spot on Fortune, Forbes list

NEW YORK (AP) — Fortune and Forbes magazines found one thing they could agree on Tuesday, proclaiming General Motors (GM) Corporation, the nation's largest public company in their two competing lists of U.S. corporate titans.

The Fortune 500 list ranked the nation's largest industrial firms by sales. The Forbes ranking included all public companies measured by sales, profits, assets and stock market value.

Both magazines have issued 500 rankings for years, but this was the first time in recent memory that the lists were released the same day. In an effort to upstage its competitor, Forbes topped its rankings with a "super 50," it described as the most powerful companies across all categories.

GM was on top either way, with nearly \$127 billion in sales and \$4.2 billion in earnings during 1989, despite fierce foreign competition and cutthroat rebates that dampened business for all big three automakers — GM, Ford and Chrysler.

The Fortune 500 overall also had a profit decline in 1989 after years of strong growth, reflecting the slowdown in industrial America.

10 were: Ford Motor Co., Exxon Corp., International Business Machines (IBM) Corp., General Electric Co., Mobil Corp., Philip Morris Co., Chrysler Corp., E.I. Du Pont de Nemours and Co., and Texaco Inc.

Rounding out the top 10 of the Forbes super 50 were: General Electric (GE), Exxon, IBM, Ford, Philip Morris, American Telephone and Telegraph Corp., Mobil, Du Pont and Sears, Roebuck and Co.

The Fortune 500 list appears in the April 23 edition and is available on newsstands Wednesday. Forbes released its ranking two weeks before it is to hit the stands in the April 30 edition.

Fortune 500 sales jumped seven per cent to a record \$2.16 trillion in 1989, but overall earnings fell 8.2 per cent to \$105.6 billion. In the previous two years, profits among the big manufacturers had climbed an unprecedented 79 per cent.

Median profits fell in nine of Fortune's 27 industry groups and only 264 of the top 500 companies had earnings growth, down from 327 in 1988.

Pharmaceuticals had the largest median increase in

earnings, up 19.6 per cent; followed by beverages, 18.3 per cent; textiles, 15.3 per cent; food, 14 per cent; and electronics 10 per cent.

The motor vehicles and parts industry suffered the largest median earnings decline, down 25 per cent, followed by aerospace, down 12.5 per cent; petroleum refining, down 11.8 per cent; transportation equipment, down 9.4 per cent; and computers, down nine per cent.

Fortune said six of the 10 largest industrial companies suffered double-digit earnings declines, including a 66 per cent drop at Chrysler, whose ranking was dropped a notch from 1988.

"In the 1960s and 1970s, back before global competition became so intense and incessant, the earnings of the 500 companies invariably rose as long as the domestic economy was growing. Not any more," Fortune said.

Foreign competition, especially from Japan, was particularly fierce in the motor vehicles and parts industry, which ranked as the poorest performer by nearly every measure of profitability, according to Fortune. That sector also was hurt by high interest rates and rebates.

Iraq seeks stronger ties with Japan

TOKYO (R) — Iraqi Oil Minister Issam Abdul Rahim Al-Chalabi said Wednesday Baghdad wants to boost technical and economic cooperation and cultural exchanges with Japan, a senior Japanese official reported.

Development of Iraqi industry and expansion of its oil production capacity would also benefit Japan, Chalabi was quoted as telling Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama.

But the foreign ministry official told reporters the Iraqi minister made no specific requests.

Chalabi met Nakayama the day after arriving in Japan Tuesday for a five-day official visit.

He is scheduled to meet International Trade and Industry Minister Kibun Muto Friday.

Chalabi was quoted as saying stable oil supplies were important for the 1990s so production capacity should be increased.

He said there should be no repeat of the oil shocks of the 1970s, when oil prices rose sharply in a short period, or of the problems of the 1980s when slack demand depressed prices for producers, the foreign ministry official said.

Such sharp price fluctuations were not good for either oil producers or consumers, Chalabi was quoted as saying. It was important to promote stable supplies at prices which satisfied both oil-producing and consuming countries.

Nakayama told Chalabi that Japan had been maintaining good relations with Baghdad and he hoped for long-term stable supplies of oil from Iraq, the ministry official said.

He noted the Iraqi minister's visit to Japan was one of a number of such trips recently by big oil producers such as Saudi Arabia, whose oil minister, Hisham Nazer, came to Tokyo in January.

The major producers aimed to strengthen ties with Japan, he said.

The Iraqi oil minister also told Nakayama his country hoped Japan would play a positive role in resolving the Iran-Iraq issue, the foreign ministry official said.

Nakayama was quoted as saying he hoped both Iran and Iraq would make efforts to achieve permanent peace.

London orders communities to lower taxes, cut budgets

LONDON (AP) — The government, trying to limit the upheaval caused by its unpopular new local tax, ordered authorities in the 20 highest-spending communities to impose lower taxes and cut budgets.

The move came Tuesday, in the aftermath of rampages in central London Saturday night when a huge rally against the so-called poll tax turned into a riot.

The tax is widely unpopular because it is imposed on a per-person basis rather than pro rata.

Environment Secretary Chris Patten gave the top-spending authorities a 28-day deadline to reduce the tax for this fiscal year.

If they refuse, Patten will impose the cuts.

Patten said the budgets of the 20 districts targeted, out of more than 400 districts in England and Wales, were the highest above the government targets.

Under the new tax, most families are paying about one-third more than previously. The average tax level, including in conservative-run districts, is £363 (£592) a person, about one-third higher than the government target.

The taxes are up, in many cases, because local authorities' spending for the 1990-91 fiscal year amounts to £15.8 billion (£38.3 billion) — £3 billion (£4.9 billion) higher than government targets.

"It is deplorable that local authorities have chosen to budget at these levels, putting an unacceptable burden on the local people," Patten told the House of Commons. "It is little wonder that strong feelings have been expressed up and down the country."

The cuts ordered by Patten ranged from £99 (£161) lopped off the £424 (£691) tax levied by a West London district, Hammersmith and Fulham, to a modest £29 (£46) off the £450 (£733) tax set by St. Helens in northwest

England.

Councilors from the districts singled out described the move as vindictive and said they would mount legal challenges. Some warned they would have to cut services, ranging from running schools and old age homes to garbage collection.

The opposition Labour Party described the move as a "final admission of the poll tax's failure."

Labour controls 18 of the 20 councils targeted. No council run by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party was on the list.

Thatcher's original aim was to undermine support for Labour-run councils because they set high tax rates. But both Labour and Tory councils have set tax levels over the government targets.

Both government and Labour lawmakers have also condemned Saturday's riot in which mobs tore through London's West End, burning cars, looting, smashing shop windows and terrifying shoppers, theatergoers and sight-seers.

Police say the violence, which began with an attempt to storm Thatcher's 10 Downing Street residence, was organized by extreme left-wing groups and anarchists.

Labour leader Neil Kinnock charged in angry exchanges with Thatcher in the Commons before Patten's announcement "You can barely conceal your delight at the diversion the uproar provided."

"When it comes to extremists the difference is this: 'I fight them, you need them,'" Kinnock added, his voice nearly drowned by Tory lawmakers' shouts of protest.

Thatcher retorted that Kinnock talked "nonsense."

She argues that the tax, which came into effect April 1, is fair because most of Britain's 38 million adults will pay, instead of only property owners under the previous system of local taxes.

Bonn eager to begin monetary talks with east

BONN (R) — West Germany said Wednesday it would open monetary union talks with East Germany as soon as the country's first non-Communist government had been installed.

Government spokesman said the framework of monetary union must be ready by late April or early May for the West German mark to be introduced in East Germany by this summer as planned.

"The point is to improve the living conditions for our compatriots in East Germany in a fast, thorough and lasting way through a speedy economic reconstruction," spokesman Hans Klein said.

"The West German government will therefore begin nego-

tiations with the new East German government immediately after it has been formed," he said.

East Germany's Christian Democratic Party (CDU) said Wednesday it expected agreement soon on a coalition government with the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD). CDU leader Lothar de Maiziere, an ally of Bonn Chancellor Helmut Kohl, would probably be elected prime minister next week.

The Bonn and East Berlin governments would have just a few weeks to hammer out an agreement on a monetary and economic union, which will be a first step to full political unification.

Government spokesman Dieter Vogel said an agreement need

not be signed that soon, "but the basic outlines, the significant contents of such an agreement must be ready... at the end of April or early May."

He said if introduction of the Western mark in East Germany were delayed, the East German economy would suffer and people might again emigrate westward.

Some 2,000 East Germans per day settled in West Germany earlier this year but the numbers dropped to about 5,000 a week after the March 18 election.

The government said it was still examining a proposal from the central bank, the Bundesbank, to introduce the West German mark at a one-for-two rate against the weak East German mark.

U.S. threatened nations over tobacco sales

PERTH, Australia (AP) — A U.S. Public Health Official said Wednesday that the United States had used threats of trade sanctions unless the tobacco industry was allowed into several Asian countries.

Dr. Gregory Connolly, director of the office for non-smoking and health in the Massachusetts Public Health Department, said the U.S. had threatened Taiwan, Japan, Korea and Thailand with trade sanctions unless they opened up their markets to U.S. cigarettes and tobacco advertising.

"We are trading them cancer in the form of Camel cigarettes," Connolly told a world health conference. "That is something to be condemned and ashamed of."

Connolly did not say when the threats were made or by whom. U.S. tobacco company officials were not immediately available for comment.

American Cancer Society Chief Executive William Tipping

Inside-trader Boesky freed

NEW YORK (R) — Wall Street's Ivan Boesky, who went to prison two years ago for his role in the biggest insider-trading scandal in U.S. history, was set free Wednesday.

He was released at 5 a.m. EDT (0900 GMT) from a Brooklyn halfway house where he had been staying since December, said a spokesman for the correctional centre.

Boesky was released into home custody from the halfway house eight weeks ago. But he has been required to call officials there every day and stay two nights a week at the facility, and has been visited by the centre's staff once a week at his home and place of employment.

Boesky, who was sent to prison March 23, 1988, spent most of his term in the minimum-security Lompoc Federal Prison camp in California. Last December he was transferred to the Brooklyn Community Corrections Centre.

Following his release he will have to report to a probation officer once a month for the next six months.

The spokesman declined to say

where Boesky was working, but he is reported to be living in the New York area. Boesky owns a 75-acre (30-hectare) estate north of New York.

Boesky, once one of Wall Street's top speculators who specialized in takeover stocks, shocked the financial world in 1986 when he agreed to pay \$100 million to settle charges brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) that he illegally used confidential company information to make millions of dollars.

He also agreed to plead guilty to a criminal charge of filing false information with the SEC. As part of these pacts, Boesky agreed to inform on his Wall Street contacts and this cooperation allowed the government to break up the insider-trading ring.

In return for his help, Boesky received a lenient prison sentence of three years. With remission the term ended up being even lighter than that.

He is expected to be the star witness against those who are alleged to have helped him make his fortune.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES					
Wednesday, April 4, 1990 Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell		Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	670.0	674.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	421.7	424.2
Pound Sterling	1097.0	1103.6	Dutch guilder	330.4	332.5
Deutschmark	394.7	397.1	Swedish crown	109.3	110.0
Swiss franc	446.0	448.7	Italian lira (for 100)	33.8	34.1
French franc	117.5	118.2	Belgian franc (for 10)	190.9	192.0

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES			
Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.			
	One Sterling	U.S. dollars	
One U.S. dollar	1.6400/10	Canadian dollar	1.1675/85
	1.6980/87	Deutschmarks	1.9105/15
	1.5037/44	Dutch guilders	35.08/13
	35.08/13	Swiss francs	5.6990/7040
	5.6990/7040	Belgian francs	1247/1248
	1247/1248	French francs	158.90/159.00
	158.90/159.00	Italian lire	6.1240/90
	6.1240/90	Japanese yen	6.5645/95
	6.5645/95	Swedish crowns	6.4890/4940
	6.4890/4940	Norwegian crowns	374.80/375.20
	374.80/375.20	Danish crowns	
		U.S. dollars	

WORLD STOCK MARKETS	
TOKYO — Share prices closed down but off their lows as bearish jitters gripped the market. Fears that some speculators face problems aggravated a general feeling that the market has not touched bottom. The Nikkei index lost 316.78 to 28,442.94.	
HONG KONG — Share prices ended little changed as caution over falls in Tokyo stocks and mild Peking jitters kept prices in a narrow range. The Hang Seng index slid 1.57 to 2,960.88.	
SINGAPORE — Share prices ended weaker across the board in lethargic trading after a drop in Tokyo. The Straits Times index fell 12.91 to close at 1,543.01.	
BOMBAY — Share prices shot up broadly on heavy buying on the Bombay stock exchange and propelled the index to an all-time high of 811.13 before finishing at 805.86, up 22.89.	
FRANKFURT — Shares ended slightly lower in moderate trade as lack of buying orders stopped prices from rising. The Dax index ended 5.08 points lower at 1,963.25.	
PARIS — Dealers predicted further gains for French shares after they surged to a record high of 2,014.01 on the CAC-40 index. Two major French banks cut their base lending rate in the morning.	
ZURICH — Volume dwindled after a lively opening and dealers said trading centred on stocks in special situations. The SPI index rose 1.4 close at 1,070.4.	
LONDON — The market shadowed Wall Street, with shares slipping to the day's lows in late trading. The FTSE index closed 9.1 points lower at 2,231.6 on moderate trading volume.	
NEW YORK — Blue chips extended their modest gains at midday, aided by firming bond prices, but the wider market remained lacklustre. The Dow was up nine at 2,746.	

THE Daily Crossword by Henry Szlachet

ACROSS

- Hourglass
- Nasty remark
- Jail alai basket
- Suit to —
- Rose's man
- Rabbit fur
- 35 at least
- Ten-percenter
- Hypodermic
- Lackluster
- hearing ability
- Gala
- Woodwind
- Lyricist
- Johnny
- Gag
- Circuit
- "A partridge in —"
- Idol
- Hawaiian city
- Youngsters
- Nut
- Singing brothers
- Depart
- Consumes
- Gar. river
- Neighbor of Lebanon
- Kismet
- Spring holiday
- Nature sub.
- Arrow
- Sorrow
- Soft leather
- Northern
- native
- 45 perhaps?
- Chop finely
- Unemployed
- Short jacket
- Lanes
- 66 the line (conformed)
- "Goriot"

DOWN

- Dunderheads
- Give it —
- do-well
- An Arnez
- Harry
- Red as —
- Tin Tin
- noir
- Wine
- Golf feat
- 65 all times
- Containers
- Formicary
- residents
- 16 Conclude from evidence
- 22 Fire crime
- 24 Ousted
- 26 Companions
- 27 Strong
- adhesive
- 28 65 for some
- 29 Plaster mold
- 31 Times of note
- 33 Coeur d'—
- 34 Tough question
- 36 Ardent
- 37 Expressions of surprise
- 38 Rings
- 43 Honey badger
- 45 Strong points
- 46 Wom
- 48 — potato
- 50 Canine
- 51 Incline
- 52 Lamb
- 53 Give off
- 55 Leak slowly
- 56 TV's Jackson
- 57 Musical prices
- 58 Bird in 37A
- 61 Altar words

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

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THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

HARRIS 3-27

"Let me eat whatever I want. I promise I'll stick to my diet after I die."

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TIXYS

MERIN

VERPOL

CUTLED

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: ON HIS

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: CROWN KNEEL LACING FIASCO

Answer: While on vacation some people work harder at losing than they ordinarily do this—LOAF AT WORKING

HOROSCOPE

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY APRIL 5, 1990

GENERAL TENDENCIES: By all means be sure to attempt to force anything through today as a demanding attitude on your part will only serve to force people away from you under this current aspect.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is the day and evening to be especially considerate of whomever you come in contact and particularly those you meet in the outside world.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You are apt to make some errors where your daily activities are concerned so be sure not to be reckless with any article with which you deal.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You thirst for some good times and to get out from under some burdens but the cost would far exceed any benefits you would now receive.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Conditions at home seem difficult in arriving at decisions with other persons who dwell there so put off until tomorrow any consultations.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You have ideas about seeing and impressing some important outside associates but you would be wise to put this off till a more propitious time.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You think that by committing

yourself to something of a monetary nature you will be able to solve some enigmatic puzzle but it won't.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You are apt to be too subjective in your ideas, your wants and your needs now try to take a more objective view and save yourself concerns.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have some personal limitation that cuts at you and your certainly do not get rid of it by some hasty over action today or tonight.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Consider who is close to you and needs some help in solving difficult problems but find out all factors before you give advice or pitch in.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You would be wise to stick to your part of any worldly or vocational interests and not now bring them to the attention of bigwigs.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You want to get into some progressive interests and activities but the time is not quite right and you need more data before doing so.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Think about your various obligations and responsibilities and try to arrange to get rid of them even if it means small regular payments.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY APRIL 6, 1990

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A great day for you to show charm and jovial spirits and your best disposition if you are to eliminate some friction and difficulties that could otherwise take place.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is the day when some changes in personalities about you is likely to be taking place so don't fight the present current, go along with it.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) It's a time to consider the best ways by which you can handle your usual routines in a more efficient manner and get at unfinished payments.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Whatever you have in mind for pleasures requires a new approach to get the fullest possible enjoyment and then arrange to try them out tonight.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A comment by an influential outside person could cause some problem with family member which can be corrected in the evening.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A communication with an associate catches you off guard but don't get in discussion during daytime but tonight it can work out to everyone's satisfaction.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Consider the various aspects of present money interests during day but don't do anything drastic about

them; tonight you see clearly right away.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A person of good judgement disagrees with an assessment you have made about a joint activity so think it over, then come to meeting of minds tonight.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You want to discuss a confidential matter as consider but it would be foolish to do so especially since it gets well solved in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Some revision in friendships is apt to be at your fingertips now so be ready to keep old ones and also make some new acquaintances.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Desire for some important new arrangements at home should not keep you from doing an unusually good vocational outside work situations.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have improved ideas for advancing your present interests but they need to be worked on before you do something definite about them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Consider all obligations facing you and how you feel you can best organize them so that you gain the best of results with business persons assistance.

كثيرا من الامل

NBA basketball roundup

Philadelphia continues winning

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Charles Barkley scored 26 points, including 14 in the third period, as the high-scoring Philadelphia 76ers won their eighth straight game overall and 23rd straight at home against the Houston Rockets, 133-112 Tuesday night.

Philadelphia hasn't lost a regular-season game to Houston at the Spectrum since Jan. 2, 1974. The Rockets did win a playoff game there on May 15, 1977.

Philadelphia improved its home record to 32-5. The 76ers averaged 141 points in their last three games.

Vernon Maxwell and Akeem Olatunji won 19 points apiece for the Rockets.

Isiah Thomas scored six of his 24 points during a second-quarter surge.

The victory was a season-high 15th straight at home for Detroit and its 12th straight at home

against Boston.

James Edwards led Detroit with 28 points.

Gerald Wilkins scored 10 of his 25 points in the pivotal third quarter as New York won for only the second time in its last 11 games.

The Knicks, 4-8 in their last 12 home games after a 22-2 start at Madison Square Garden, prevented the Cavaliers from pulling into a tie with Atlanta for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Cleveland was scheduled to host the Hawks Wednesday night.

John Williams scored 26 points for the Cavaliers.

Orlando's 20-point fourth-quarter comeback fell agonizingly short when Golden State's Rod Higgins made a free throw with 10 seconds remaining.

The Warriors led 112-91 entering the final period. But the magic rallied on a 35-14 surge to

tie the game on two free throws by Jerry Reynolds with 53 seconds left. After Higgins hit one of two free throws, Orlando's Morlon Wiley missed two jumpers that could have won the game.

Chris Mullin scored 32 points for the Warriors.

Otis Smith, who helped trigger the late Orlando rally, scored 27 points on 11-of-17 shooting.

Michael Jordan scored 29 points and Scottie Pippen added 21 as Chicago won its fifth straight game. The victory was the Bulls' 11th in their last 13 games and seventh straight over the Pacers at Chicago Stadium.

Miller led Indiana with 26 points.

Tod Murphy broke an 88-88 tie, scoring Minnesota's final four points, and San Antonio missed two short shots in the final seconds. Murphy's jumper with 2:04 left gave Minnesota a 90-88

lead, and he added two foul shots with 30 seconds to play.

Minnesota's Tony Campbell had 27 points. Willie Anderson led San Antonio with 24 points.

Karl Malone had 36 points and 13 rebounds as Utah took a three-game lead in the midwest division and matched a franchise record with its 51st victory of the season.

The Jazz, 51-21, picked up a game in the standings because the Minnesota Timberwolves upset the San Antonio Spurs 92-90. The Jazz finished 51-31 last season.

Thurl Bailey scored 15 points for Utah. League leader John Stockton dished out 14 assists.

Dell Curry and Kelly Tripucka led Charlotte with 18 points apiece.

Charles Smith scored eight of his 24 points in 2:05 late in the fourth quarter as Los Angeles snapped a four-game losing streak and handed Sacramento its fifth straight loss.

Smith scored eight straight points to give the Clippers a 108-100 lead with 2:14 remaining. The Kings had pulled to 100-95 with a 7-2 spurt.

Danny Ainge led Sacramento with 30 points and Antoine Carr added 25.

Tom Chambers scored 34 points and Kevin Johnson had eight of his 23 in the final 4:25 as Phoenix avoided a second-half collapse.

Kevin Johnson matched his season-high of 20 assists for Phoenix.

Rolando Blackman scored 22 points for Dallas, which had won four straight road games.

Dana Barros' three-point shot with 16 seconds left in overtime and Jim Farmer's two free throws 10 seconds later gave Seattle the victory over Portland.

Terry Porter scored 27 points for Portland. Dale Ellis led Seattle with 30 points.

Arabs want more say in Asian soccer games

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — A battle is brewing for top posts in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), partly because of the desire of Arab states for a bigger say in Asian soccer development, officials said.

AFC President Hamzah Abu Samah of Malaysia, who also holds a vice-presidency of the Federation Internationale De Football Association (FIFA) representing the AFC, will be challenged for both posts at a congress next month.

Hamzah will face Malaysian Defence Minister Tan Sri Ahmad Rishauddeen for the AFC presidency, while Kuwait's Prince Fahed Al Sabah plans to take him on for the FIFA post, AFC officials said.

Officials expect a close fight at

the four-day congress, which begins on the Indonesian resort island of Bali on May 2.

AFC officials said opposition to Hamzah mainly came from the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) headed by Sultan Ahmad Shah, the ruler of one of Malaysia's 13 states.

The sultan recently told reporters the FAM was unhappy over the AFC. Rishauddeen, FAM deputy president, is a proxy of the sultan, AFC officials said.

Malaysian soccer officials said the FAM was unhappy over the AFC handling of several regional soccer tournaments which pitted Malaysia against powerful South Korea.

The AFC, set up in 1954 and headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, has had a Malaysian president

since 1965.

AFC officials said Kuwait's Prince Fahed had agreed to back Rishauddeen if the Malaysians supported him for the FIFA vice-president's post.

"Prince Fahed feels that both the top posts in AFC should not be held by one person and the Arab states must have a larger say in Asia's soccer," said one AFC official who asked not to be identified.

Officials said Hamzah, who commands strong support in the 34-member AFC, is likely to receive tacit FIFA backing to continue as president ahead of the World Cup finals in Italy in June.

"Hamzah is the incumbent and many may not want to rock the boat since it is the World Cup year," said one AFC official.

Liverpool goes 3 points clear of Aston Villa

LONDON (R) — Ian Rush hit his 22nd goal of the season to help Liverpool beat Wimbledon 2-1 and go three points clear at the top of the English soccer league Tuesday.

Welsh international striker Rush gave Liverpool a ninth-minute lead and Scotland's Gary Gillespie put the home team 2-0 ahead with the final kick of the first half.

But Wimbledon, boasting the best away record in the first division, refused to lie down and pulled back a goal in the 71st minute through Terry Gibson in a goalmouth scramble.

Liverpool, beaten 2-1 by Wimbledon in a memorable 1988 F.A. Cup final at Wembley, were without injured striker Peter

Beardsley but his England teammate John Barnes fitted smoothly into the central attacking role alongside Rush.

Barnes set up the opening goal, stroking the ball out to Rush on the right of the area for the Welshman to control before smashing a ferocious shot into the back of the net.

Wimbledon had come close to scoring from their first corner of the match a minute before Rush's goal and both teams had narrow misses in the last 15 minutes with Wimbledon substitute Alan Cork hooking over the Liverpool bar in injury time.

Liverpool now have 62 points and have played one match less than nearest rivals Aston Villa who have 59 points from 32 games.

Faldo not worried about defending Masters title

AUGUSTA, Georgia (R) — Nick Faldo is not worried about successfully defending his Masters title this year.

"There's no pressure on me to repeat," the 32-year-old Englishman said Tuesday, two days before the start of the 1990 Masters.

"That's only been done by Jack," he explained, referring to Jack Nicklaus, one of the greatest golfers of all time and the only one to win back-to-back Masters.

"I'm able to forget about last year. Once I start out there, it's all fresh," said an obviously relaxed Faldo, who won the coveted green jacket of the Masters champion last year with a birdie on the second hole of a sudden death playoff with American Scott Hoch.

While Faldo, the 1985 British Open champion, took a casual attitude toward winning consecutive Masters titles, he acknowledged that he was in a good position to do just that.

"I'm feeling better than I did last year," he told reporters after a practice round over the 6,313-meter course at the Augusta National Golf Club, permanent home of the Masters.

"I feel well prepared. It's just a matter of being relaxed and going out and playing," Faldo added.

However, repeating as Masters champion has proven almost im-

possible over the years.

Since the great Bobby Jones founded the tournament in 1934 only Nicklaus has managed the feat — in 1965 and 1966 — but barely. He had to survive an 18-hole playoff with two others to do it.

When Sandy Lyle, Faldo's Scottish nemesis, returned to Augusta last year after winning his green jacket in 1988, he failed to make the cut with rounds of 77 and 76.

Seve Ballesteros, the brilliant Spaniard considered to be one of the world's best these days, won the Masters in 1980 and 1983 and, he, too, failed to make the cut the following years.

Faldo has his work cut out for him this week as there are any number of players here who could win this event, the first of golf's four "major" championships.

One need look no further than the 50-year-old Nicklaus, who has won the Masters six times — two more than anyone else.

Nicklaus, who has also been second at Augusta four times, is coming off a victory on Sunday in the first Senior tournament of his career and he says he is playing some of the best golf of his life.

Nicklaus shares Augusta national's 72-hole record of 271 — 17 under par. "Obviously I like the course and know how to

play it," he said of Augusta after his four-stroke victory in the Seniors event Sunday.

Ballesteros could also start the 1990s as he did the 1980s, when he won the first of his two green jackets.

While he has not played up to his usual form this year, Ballesteros finished a strong third Sunday in the U.S. PGA tour event at the Woodlands in Texas and one could be poised for victory here.

If anyone is ready to win at Augusta, it could be Australian Greg Norman, who has finished with one stroke of the winner in three of the past four Masters — including 1987, when Larry Mize chipped in for a birdie on the second hole of their playoff.

Norman has already won once in this country — at the Doral Open, when he chipped in for an eagle on the first playoff hole — and he finished second in the Bay Hill Classic two weeks ago.

Another serious contender this week is Curtis Strange, winner of the last two U.S. Opens who is fourth behind Norman, Faldo and Ballesteros in the world rankings.

"I'd like very dearly to play well here," Strange said. "When you come here — and to the other majors — winning is the only thing."

Brazilian coach confirms Romario on World Cup team

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Sebastiao Lazaroni, coach of Brazil's national soccer team, has confirmed he will name injured star Romario to the World Cup squad despite a broken leg.

The coach also praised the recent play of Muller of Italy's Torino club and hinted the attacker could replace Bebeto on the starting team.

On his arrival from Europe Monday, Lazaroni announced he would name 23 players to the World Cup team on Apr. 16, instead of the 22 originally planned. The extra berth will go to an attacker in case Romario doesn't recover, he said.

"Romario is very important to the team and is worth every effort," Lazaroni told reporters. "He will be on the list of 23 and we will wait for his recovery as long as the regulation permits, up to 10 days before our debut."

Romario, whose full name is Romario De Souza Faria, plays for PSV Eindhoven of the

Netherlands. He broke his leg in a league game March 4, and after he reinjured it last week, doctors implanted a metal screen to set the bone.

The screw and the plaster cast are to be removed in early May, barely a month before Brazil plays Sweden on June 10 in Turin, Italy, for Group C.

However, Romario must sit out the first World Cup match to complete a three-game suspension. He will become eligible to play in Brazil's second game, against Costa Rica on June 16.

Lazaroni did not say who the 23rd player would be. But the sporting press has speculated that two are under consideration: Renato of Rio's Flamengo Club, and Joao Paulo of Bari of Italy.

However, Lazaroni said a starting berth could go to wing attacker Muller, whose full name is Luis Antonio Correla De Cota. He played well coming off the bench in Brazil's 1-0 loss to England in an exhibition game in London

last week.

"I liked his speed, strength and precision," Lazaroni said. "He showed against England he could be one of the sensations of the World Cup."

Muller and Bebeto — whose full name is Jose Roberto Gama De Oliveira — are battling for the second starting spot on the attack alongside Careca of Italy's Napoli Club, who is considered irreplaceable.

Werder's hope alive

BREMEN, West Germany (R) — A bizarre own goal in the dying seconds by Fiorentina goalkeeper Marco Landucci kept alive Werder Bremen's hopes of a place in the UEFA Cup final with a 1-1 draw in their semifinal first leg Tuesday.

Landucci fumbled a curled corner in the 90th minute after a collision with defender Sergio Battistini and the ball ended in the net to earn the West German side a draw to take to the second leg in Italy in two weeks.

But the mistake was just reward for a hard-working Werder side who attacked throughout but had been hit by a breakaway goal by Marco Nappi in the 78th minute.

Much to the distaste of the 32,000-crowd, Fiorentina packed their defence with players for most of the match, making it difficult for the West Germans to find space to shoot at goal.

"We attacked one goal for virtually the whole 90 minutes," Werder coach Otto Rehhagel said afterwards. "The equaliser was justice."

Fiorentina packed all eleven players into their own penalty area on several occasions in the second half to hold off Werder who knocked holders Napoli out of the competition in the third round.

"The Italians concentrated on their defence as expected so it was very difficult for us to score," Rehhagel said. "My team battled

brilliantly. We are still in with a great chance for the second leg."

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Sri Lankan lady travelling to Amman via Dubai on Flight EK 905 on Thursday March 8, lost a suitcase containing used sarees and other clothes, but more importantly valuable certificates and other important documents.

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El Salvador, rebels agree to U.N.-sponsored peace moves

GENEVA (R) — The Salvadorean government and leftist guerrillas Wednesday accepted a series of United Nations-sponsored measures designed to restore peace to the Central American state.

The two sides, meeting for the first time in six months, signed a seven-point document prepared by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar foreseeing a U.N.-supervised truce in the 10-year war as a first step toward a negotiated peace.

"I have received assurances from both parties that there is a serious intention and good faith to seek to bring about such an end through negotiations," Perez

de Cuellar said in the document endorsed by the two sides. It also provided for the guerrillas to become a legal political organisation, democratic moves in the country, unrestricted respect for human rights and the reunification of Salvadorean society.

"The initial objective shall be to achieve political agreements for arranging a halt to the armed confrontation and any acts that

infringe the rights of the civilian population, which will have to be verified by the United Nations subject to the approval of the Security Council," the document stated.

It was signed by Justice Minister Oscar Santamaría for the government and by Commander Shafik Handal for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).

Perez de Cuellar signed the document, written in his name, at a ceremony held at the U.N. European headquarters in Geneva.

The document said that once a

truce was achieved, the process would lead to the reintegration of FMLN members into the civil, institutional and political life of the country.

The secretary-general said he had agreed to sponsor the agreement at the request of Central American leaders and the two sides involved in a civil war which has killed 75,000 people in the last 10 years.

The document said both sides pledged not to renounce negotiations and added that the process would be a permanent one conducted secretly.

It did not say when or where the negotiations would begin.

Premadasa says 'reign of terror' over

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) — President Ranasinghe Premadasa, opening a new session of parliament, said Wednesday the "reign of terror" in this tropical island was over.

The chief opposition parties disagreed with Premadasa's rosy assessment, which was reminiscent of his independence day speech exactly two months.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, headed by former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, and two allied parties boycotted the parliamentary meeting. The parties issued a statement saying their absence was in protest of "undemocratic actions of the government, the murders, abductions and violations of human rights and the limitless burdens heaped on the people by the increasing cost of living."

The three parties, which hold 73 of parliament's 225 seats, also said there was no point in attending the session since presidential speeches are not topics for debate.

Premadasa, whose United National Party has 124 seats, maintained the worst was over and the fear that had gripped the country had disappeared.

The president, who took office on Jan. 2, 1989, said that last year "disruption and destruction became the order of the day... The very foundations of democracy in Sri Lanka were threatened. The country was engulfed in a reign of terror unprecedented in our nation."

In the last 10 months, the government has scored successes on three main fronts: — Last June it entered negotia-

tions with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the most powerful of the Tamil guerrilla groups that launched a separatist insurrection against the Sinhalese-dominated government in 1983.

— In the final months of 1989 it decimated the leadership of Sinhalese extremists trying to overthrow it.

— On March 24 the last Indian peacekeeping troops, who had bogged down in a stalemate with the Tamil Tigers, left Sri Lanka.

Premadasa asked all ethnic groups to prepare for sacrifices to help solve the problems of the Tamil minority.

More than 17,000 people died in the island's twin wars. At least 11,000 people were killed in the Tamil revolt.



Mrs. Bush's double vision gone

WASHINGTON (AP) — First lady Barbara Bush has said that she no longer suffers double vision caused by graves disease. "Last week was the first week without seeing double," she told reporters at the White House. "I think the radiation worked. That's very good news." She said she believes radiation treatment she underwent in January has affected the vision problem. Aides had said it would take two to four months before it would be known if the treatment was effective. Mrs. Bush was diagnosed early last year with Graves disease, an immune system disorder that initially attacked her thyroid, causing dramatic weight loss. It caused eye irritation and double vision, especially in the morning. The first lady chatted with two reporters after she surprised tourists, showing up in the White House main foyer where the tours pass. Mrs. Bush decided to conduct a small ceremony at the foot of the grand staircase to receive the new editions of "The presidents of the United States" and "the first ladies" from White House Historical Association President Robert Breeden.

Michelangelo's nudes to remain covered

VATICAN CITY (R) — Art restorers said Tuesday they could not remove veils and other coverings added to hide nudity in Michelangelo's last judgment fresco because the originals had been destroyed. The announcement was made after a week-long international symposium of art historians studying the first phase of a multi-million dollar restoration of one of the world's greatest art treasures. The 10-year cleaning of the ceiling frescoes was completed last month and scaffolding has been built for a four-year project to restore a massive, 300-figure scene depicting the last judgment on the wall behind the main altar.

Swiss police recover stolen Van Gogh

ZURICH, Switzerland (AP) — Police have announced the arrest of three Italian nationals when they tried to pick up 2 million Swiss francs (\$1.3 million) in ransom demanded for the return of a stolen painting by Vincent Van Gogh. The canvas, "Wheatfield with Sheaves," which had vanished from a storeroom in a warehouse of a moving company on March 12, was recovered undamaged, said police spokesman Marcel Frieden. It was valued at 2.5 million Swiss francs. He said the ransom had been demanded in a letter received by an insurance company 11 days after the theft. The company alerted police who arrested the three men last Friday at a place outside Zurich where the money was to be handed over according to their instructions.

Man held with drugs implanted in thighs

WASHINGTON (R) — Sharp-eyed U.S. customs agents spying a stiffly walking airline passenger with bulging thighs arrested him after finding about a pound (half a kilogram) of cocaine implanted in his legs, the customs service said. It said Roberto O'Neill, a 24-year-old Colombian, was arrested at San Juan International Airport on a stopover of an Iberia Airlines flight from Bogota to Madrid. A customs service spokesman said the man was inspected and taken to a hospital where doctors opened sutures and found the cocaine in four plastic pouches in his upper thighs.

German women prefer coffee and kisses

FRANKFURT, West Germany (R) — Coffee and kisses — that's what most West German women want to wake up to on Sunday mornings, but not sex, according to a new survey. The poll of how 25-40 year old women most wanted to be awakened on their Sunday day off, found that 95 per cent wanted romantic "little morning kisses". Some 81 per cent liked the idea of being served coffee and crispy rolls. However, making love along with the kisses was the choice of only 26 per cent of women, said the survey by one of West Germany's largest coffee companies. Perhaps to avoid the possibility, sleeping-in and lazing in bed were bottom of the list. The survey did not ask men's opinions.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Medellin cartel blamed for killings

BOGOTA (AP) — Authorities are blaming the Medellin drug cartel for a spate of attacks on police that have left at least nine officers dead in two days. Police also say the kidnapping of a national legislator Tuesday was the work of drug traffickers. The attacks come in a new outbreak of violence in Colombia's war against the drug trade. The traffickers batted their violence in January in an attempt to persuade the government to enter negotiations. But the government of President Virgilio Barco is pressing its drug war. The El Tiempo newspaper reported Tuesday that the government would extradite three more traffickers — one of them a congressman — to the United States this week. Traffickers threatened last week to explode a five-ton bomb in Bogota for every new extradition.

Chinese fugitive student leader in Paris

HONG KONG (R) — A Hong Kong newspaper said Wednesday that fugitive Chinese student leader Chai Ling had found sanctuary in France after 10 months on the run. The report in the English-language South China Morning Post appeared only hours after Hong Kong's TVB television station ran an interview with Chai Ling. She appeared with her husband, Feng Congde, also wanted by the Chinese authorities. The post quoted unidentified sources as saying Chai Ling, one of the leaders of the student-led democracy movement bloody suppressed by Chinese authorities on June 4 last year, had escaped from China on March 24.

U.S. may scale back Bomber production

WASHINGTON (AP) — The administration of President George Bush is considering scaling back production of the B-2 bomber. Air Force Secretary Donald Rice said Tuesday in his first public comments on the Pentagon's review of major weapons systems. "We think there are some alternate profiles... with some very modest effect on the total cost of the programme," Rice told members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. The air force secretary declined to provide many specifics but said Defence Secretary Dick Cheney is re-examining current Pentagon plans to buy 132 of the Stealth bombers at a cost of more than \$70 billion. The overriding concern at the department is forcing up the cost of a single, radar-evading bomber, about \$530 million apiece, by purchasing less than the full fleet.

Bush asked to testify in Marcos trial

NEW YORK (R) — Imelda Marcos, charged with plundering the Philippines' treasury to husk New York real estate, will ask President George Bush to testify in her defence, her lawyer says, claiming it was all Bush's idea. Gerry Spence, Marcos's cowboy-hat-wearing lawyer, said during opening statements Tuesday the Reagan administration was concerned in 1981 that the late Philippine leader Ferdinand Marcos was about to invest in Libya because his wife had become friends with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi. He said Bush, who was then vice president, travelled to the Philippines to persuade the Marcoses to buy U.S. real estate instead. Spence said because of this the defence will ask Bush to testify on Mrs. Marcos' behalf.

Ireland to abolish death penalty

DUBLIN (R) — Ireland is to formally abolish the death penalty and introduce automatic jail sentences of at least 30 years for certain convicted killers, the government said in a bill published Wednesday. Capital punishment has been retained in Ireland for the killers of policemen, prison officers and foreign leaders and diplomats since hanging for all other killings was abolished in the late 1950s. Irish Justice Minister Ray Burke published details of a bill to replace the death penalty with mandatory 40-year jail sentences which, with remission, mean that killers will have to spend at least 30 years in prison. All political parties in the Irish parliament have expressed support for the bill which is expected to pass into law later this year. Ireland's last execution took place in 1954.

Ex-King to pay first visit to Romania

GENEVA (R) — Romania's ex-king Michael will return to his country this month for the first time since he was forced to abdicate 42 years ago, relatives said Wednesday. Michael, 66, plans to spend one week in the capital Bucharest where he will attend an Orthodox Church Easter service and will tour the country by car for another week, they said. He will be accompanied by his wife ex-queen Anne and three of his five daughters. Michael was put on a train out of Romania in January 1948 after the Communist government forced him to sign an abdication document. He has lived in exile in Britain, the United States and Switzerland since then.

U.S. 'not ready' to rejoin UNESCO

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States is not ready to rejoin the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and sees little improvement in the organisation, a top official said, following Britain's comment that it would not rejoin the agency. Britain, the United States and Singapore quit the agency in 1984 and 1985, charging mismanagement and anti-Western bias. "My understanding is that the time is not right for the United States to reopen the question of renewing its membership in UNESCO," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said. "My understanding is our review of action taken at UNESCO's general conference and an analysis of the so-called restructuring proposals submitted several weeks ago by UNESCO, the UNESCO director general, have led us to conclude that very little has changed since the United States withdrew at the end of 1984," she said.

Hawke cabinet sworn in

CANBERRA (AP) — Prime Minister Bob Hawke began a record fourth term in office Wednesday with his heir apparent, treasurer Paul Keating, given the added duties of deputy prime minister. The 60-year-old Hawke, first elected prime minister in 1983 and winner most recently by a narrow margin on March 24, has said he intends to lead his ruling Labour Party through the three-year term and into a potential fifth campaign. But political analysts say Keating, 46, is already being groomed for the job of leader and could take the Labour Party into the next election.

Belgian king temporarily quits over abortion law

BRUSSELS (R) — King Baudouin of Belgium temporarily gave up his throne Wednesday because his Catholic conscience would not allow him to sign a controversial law legalising abortion.

After two late-night cabinet meetings, the government issued a statement saying it had declared the 59-year-old monarch unable to reign — a procedure last used in 1940 when his father, King Leopold III, surrendered to Nazi invaders.

The cabinet immediately assumed the king's powers and promulgated the abortion law, which was published in Wednesday's official gazette. And it called a joint session of the chamber of deputies and the senate for Thursday to declare that Baudouin was able to resume his 39-year-old reign.

The manoeuvre, unprecedented in a country whose linguistic divisions have often produced extraordinary constitutional contortions, provoked an immediate outcry, with calls for the abolition of the monarchy or Baudouin's abdication.

Manila committee rejects nominee for land reform

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A congressional committee Wednesday failed to confirm President Corason Aquino's choice for land reform secretary, but she vowed to renominate Florencio Abad and force a showdown with her coalition's leading party.

If he secures the job, Abad will have the delicate task of fulfilling the desires of millions of peasants without alienating powerful landlords. His critics say he is a leftist opposed to industrial development.

The commission on appointments had been expected to reach a decision on Abad before beginning the Easter congressional recess on Friday. But the deadlock

"The procedure astonishes me," said Francis Desperre, professor of constitutional law at the Catholic University of Louvain.

"Until now, Article 82 of the constitution had been understood to have a very simple meaning: The king is sick, the king is insane, the king is physically unable to exercise his office, he must therefore be replaced," he added.

"The king is not unable to reign... as a result, articles of the constitution have quite simply been violated," said Francois Perrin, emeritus professor of constitutional law at the University of Liege.

"It is a political development which was nothing legal about it... it is a mockery to say that the king is unable to reign for a few hours, for one night," he declared.

The refusal by Baudouin, a devout Catholic, to sign the law was the final twist of a tortuous campaign to end a ban on abortion dating back to 1867. Ireland is now the only European country to outlaw abortion.

ed commission suspended confirmation hearings, tantamount to a rejection. Abad is the fourth choice for the land reform post since 1986. His predecessor, Miriam Defensor Santiago, was repeatedly rejected by the commission until she was replaced by Abad on Dec. 31.

An informal survey of the 25-member commission showed 11 members opposed to Abad, 11 supporting him and two abstaining. Senate President Jovito Salonga, leader of Abad's Liberal Party, votes only to break a tie.

The commission had failed to reach a decision on Abad during six previous sessions. against, 26 abstentions and 194 no-votes. The defaulted votes were possibly a result of lack of familiarity with a new electronic voting system.

The greatest opposition was in a vote to approve the report of the procuratorate, or prosecutor's office. In the tally, 2,271 voted for the report, 179 opposed it and 253 abstained.

The two key bills approved Wednesday define the basic law for Hong Kong after it reverts to Chinese rule in 1997 and amend the joint venture law to further protect foreign investors in China.

A resolution approved on the final day spoke of "historic victories" over the past year in furthering the socialist cause in China.

It echoed Li's work report in saying social and political stability are of "paramount importance" in the nation's modernisation drive.

Further efforts must be made to improve socialist democracy, strengthen public security and national unity and educate citizens in socialism, ideology and patriotism, it said. The struggle against bourgeois liberalism, or Western thinking, must go on, it stressed.

The congress in recent years has provided a forum for public debate on issues, but is largely powerless. This year the deputies have muted their criticisms of the government and repeated official calls for the need for stability under Communist Party rule.

The government's violent suppression of the pro-democracy movement last June was not questioned, and no one suggested that China might learn from the democratic reforms taking place in East European and other socialist countries.

All proposals submitted by congress chairman Wan Li were passed by overwhelming majorities. Li's work report was passed with a vote of 2,481 for, 12

'All contras must be disarmed by April 25'

MONTELIBAR, Nicaragua (R) — The five Central American presidents have signed an accord calling for all contra rebels to be disarmed by April 25, the day a new U.S.-backed government is to be sworn in Nicaragua.

The statement was an apparent success for outgoing Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, who had sought a strong statement from his Central American colleagues calling for the contras to

be disarmed by the time his leftist Sandinista government leaves office.

The accord signed after a two-day summit here said the demobilisation and disarming of contras — both inside and outside Nicaragua — must begin immediately and end no later than April 25.

This is the date when President-elect Violeta Chamorro is due to take office, having defeated Ortega in February elec-

tions. The contra rebels have fought an eight-year war to topple the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

The declaration of Montelibar, a resort on the Nicaraguan coast, called on United Nations and Organisation of American States teams to take "the necessary steps" to facilitate the demobilisation and for international control of all aid to the contras.

Seoul agrees to U.S. troop cutback by 1993

SEOUL (AP) — South Korea has formally agreed to a U.S. plan to cut back by 1993 7,000 of the 43,000 American troops stationed here, the Defence Ministry announced Wednesday.

The ministry said the two countries also have reached basic agreement on other pending military issues, including changing their joint command system to give South Korea more control over its military.

"We have reached full agreement on a gradual U.S. troop withdrawal, which will initially affect 7,000 noncombatants," a ministry statement said.

The announcement had been expected since February, when U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney disclosed plans to shut down three of the five U.S. air bases in South Korea in a cost-saving measure.

U.S. officials said the closure would affect some 2,000 air support personnel.

In talks with Seoul officials later, U.S. officials also indicated that they would pull out 5,000 ground troops, all noncombatants, from South Korea along with the 2,000 air support personnel in several years.

The ministry said American troop withdrawal from South Korea would be made in three stages, with the first stage affecting 7,000 soldiers in the 1990-93 period.

After the first stage, officials of the two countries will review the

situation on the Korean peninsula, including North Korea's war capability, to decide whether to push further cuts in 1994-95, it said.

Third-stage cuts, if needed, would take place after 1996, it said.

The ministry said the two countries also have agreed to alter their joint command system to give South Korea more control over its armed forces, the ministry said.

Currently, most of South Korea's 650,000-member armed forces remain under the operational control of a four-star U.S. general in a combined command system officials say is aimed at maximising combat efficiency.

The system has been criticised by radical Korean students and dissidents as an example of American infringement upon South Korean sovereignty.

The ministry said the system would be changed in 1994-95 to allow South Korea generals to command their units in peace time. The joint command system would be restored during war, it said.

Details of the change would be discussed at annual talks to be held in Washington in November, ministry officials said.

Other issues under discussion between the two countries include appointment of a South Korean general to head the United Nations Command (UNC) in armistice talks with North Korea.

Chinese warned against wearing black

Meanwhile Chinese are being warned not to wear black armbands or white flowers of mourning Thursday, a traditional day for honouring the dead that may be used for anti-government protests.

Chinese sources said Wednesday that some offices and factories in Peking are advising employees against signs of mourning on Qingming, when Chinese traditionally sweep the graves of their ancestors.

The Peking city government also has issued orders that ban organisations group visits to cemeteries unless permission is received from authorities.

Overseas dissident groups have called on students to "stroll" through Tiananmen Square Thursday in a silent memorial to the hundreds, and possibly thousands, killed when the military crushed the student-led democracy movement last June.

A similar appeal to stage "protest strolls" through the square on April 1 was thwarted when police closed the square to the public for daylong ceremonies to promote civic enthusiasm for the Asian Games to be held in Peking in September.

The government wants to avoid a repetition of the 1976 Qingming festival, when thousands streamed to Tiananmen to honour Premier Chou En-Lai, who had died earlier in the year, and protest the party's leftist leaders. Suppression of the protesters helped lead to the downfall of the leftists.

Peking citizens also are being told by their work and school units to stay away from Tiananmen Square, the focal point of last year's demonstrations. Factory leaders have been warned they will be held responsible if workers are involved in any protests.

Global weather (major world cities)

	MIN.		MAX.		
	°C	°F	°C	°F	W. Weather
AMSTERDAM...	01	34	07	45	Cloudy
ATHENS...	11	52	24	75	Cloudy
BAHRAIN...	20	68	26	79	Cloudy
BANGKOK...	27	81	34	93	Clear
Buenos Aires...	12	53	24	75	Rain
CAIRO...	12	54	25	77	Clear
CHICAGO...	02	32	12	53	Cloudy
COPENHAGEN...	03	37	12	54	Cloudy
FRANKFURT...	01	34	14	57	Clear
GENEVA...	06	43	10	50	Rain
HONG KONG...	21	70	22	72	Cloudy
ISTANBUL...	05	47	18	64	Clear
LONDON...	02	38	11	52	Cloudy
LOS ANGELES...	18	65	27	81	Cloudy
MADRID...	06	41	14	57	Cloudy
MEXICO...	19	66	34	93	Cloudy
MONTREAL...	02	26	04	39	Rain
MOSCOW...	08	46	15	59	Clear
NEW DELHI...	18	61	30	86	Clear
NEW YORK...	05	48	08	46	Cloudy
PARIS...	04	39	08	46	Clear
ROME...	11	52	14	57	Cloudy
SYDNEY...	18	64	23	73	Rain
TOKYO...	15	59	18	64	Cloudy
VIENNA...	07	45	12	54	Cloudy